

**PASSING SPIRITUALITY THROUGH CROSS- GENERATIONAL
MENTORSHIP**

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ABSTRACT

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The Seventh day Adventist Church has struggled with keeping young people committed to the church. Youth specialist of the Seventh day Adventist Church, Dr. Allan Martin, has indicated that a staggering 60-70% of young people are leaving the church.¹ The spiritual practices that the older generation have included in their lives as valuable are not being transferred to the next generation, and as a result, most of the churches in North America are suffering from an aging community. In the Thousand Oaks Seventh day Adventist Church the average age of the congregation is 65. There has been a continual disconnect between the generations in the Thousand Oaks Seventh day Adventist Church that has led to a crisis compounding itself as the generations grow further and further apart. To address this crisis, I have developed a program for the generations to mentor one another by allowing the spiritual

¹ Taashi Rowe, "Columbia Union Leaders Discuss Young Adult Attrition Whole Church Solution Needed Speaker Says," Visitor Magazine, May 16, 2013, accessed March 27, 2023, <https://columbiaunionvisitor.com/2013/columbia-union-leaders-discuss-young-adult-attrition-whole-church-solution-needed-speaker-says>.

practices that are important to the Seventh day Adventist Church to be discussed openly though short Bible study and leading questions that allow for communication to happen in a non-judgmental way.

By implementing the passing of spirituality through cross-generational mentorship the participants grow through the process of transferring spiritual practices from one generation to the next, recognizing that the interpretation and value of those spiritual practices will be interpreted in the life context of the younger generation. And through the developed relationship between the generations, this will also allow for the older generation to reevaluate the spiritual practice through the lens of the younger generation thereby allowing cross-generational mentorship to impact the life of the older generation.

Parents participate with their young people by going through one of eight subjects each week for eight weeks. The duration for each of the studies and discussion is expected to last for 30 minutes to an hour. Following the discussion time and prayer, both the parents and the young people respond to a survey separately to evaluate the subject discussed. The survey that both generations participate in are evaluated in three main areas, how well they are willing to be open to the other in their spiritual need, how willing they are to value the others spiritual practice and make it their own, and finally, how willing are they to defend the others spiritual practice against those who might be critical in the local church.

At the project's completion, participants showed a willingness to be open to the other views, but they are less likely to value the other views, and they are much less likely to defend other views.

The responses raise two main questions for further inquiry. First, how open is a person really if they are not willing to defend the perspective about which they claim to be open?

Secondly, would the results vary if we defined the risks involved to which the participants were being asked to defend?

Overall, the project brought parents closer to the spiritual needs of their youth. The parents all seemed to respond very positively to their young person's spiritual needs as they related to the subjects through which they worked. But when it came to the ability to embrace the spiritual expression of their young person, they were slightly less likely to make it part of their own worship practice and even less likely to defend the needs of their youth against critical people in the church community.

There was one side note that caused concern, upon completing the project. It was discovered that families are not having home worship regularly, where these spiritual practices can take root in the lives of young people. Without the ability for spiritual conversations to take place because family worship is not happening with regularity, I suspect the defending of the spiritual needs of the young people will go unchecked for a lack of knowing what those spiritual needs are. Further study needs to be developed in how to elevate the importance of family worship in the challenge of other competing interests that busy the lives of the families to the point of family worship indifference.

This mentorship program would revolutionize the openness, value, and defense of young people exploring their spirituality and expression and would force the older generation to broaden the confines of their spirituality and bring them into the next generations reception to God. The doctrine of, "Growing in Christ," is part of our belief system. As older people mentor younger, both generations will continue to grow in Christ in ways that will transcend the nostalgia of the older generation's spiritual past, while allowing the younger generation to be

nurtured in the foundational spiritual practices of the church and making application to the current generation.

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Chapter 1.

Introduction

You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates. Deut.6:5-9 ESV

I grew up as a Seventh-day Adventist. My father was a minister, and, in my family, there were four children. We had traditional spiritual times, such as family dinners on Friday evenings and church together on Sabbath days. On a typical Sabbath afternoon, we would take naps. I would nap while waiting for the sun to go down so that I could watch television. We practiced our Sabbath time from sundown Friday to sundown Saturday.

Sabbath was a focal point for my family and I throughout my childhood. Adventists are strict in their Sabbath interpretation. As a result, we did were not allowed any “worldly” activity, in order that we would keep the Sabbath day holy. My family and I went to church together on Sabbath. I participated in the programs that the church provided for spiritual development. When it came to church activity, I would go to youth group before the worship service. When youth group was over, I would take my place in the back of the church where my friends and I would disconnect from worship and discuss what we were doing that night when the sun went down. The worship service didn’t interest me, and I typically had no engagement with the services.

My spirituality was surface-level, and I don’t think that I had any spiritual depth until I was much older. I was baptized when I was eleven years of age. I attended grade school within the Adventist school system, which meant that the Bible was an integral part of my education. The

only adult friend I had was potentially the youth pastor of the church, but we didn't really talk about life and spirituality personally. I do remember we had a meeting when I had taken up smoking. He met with me to try to encourage me to quit. That was the only time I met individually with the youth pastor to discuss any subject that affected my spirituality.

I did have one mentor in my school who impacted my spiritual development. I had become interested in drama at school. I joined a Christian drama group that would perform at different events and churches in the area. I became close with one of the adult advisors to the group who was the director of the dramas. It was through this relationship that my spirituality became more important to me. For some reason he often cast me as the "Jesus" character in the plays. This was in stark contrast to my regular behavior, and I seriously doubt any of my friends at the time thought that the casting was appropriate. This apparent miscast allowed me to see the contrast between how the play characterized Jesus and who I was in normal life. I would often talk to this mentor and ask questions about the portrayal. This led to more discussion. I began to find that Christianity was more than going to church and "doing" Sabbath. There began to be depth in my Bible reading. I began to feel that there was someone really listening to my prayers. I felt that there was more to the religion than I had yet known, and I wanted to know more. This mentor allowed me to grow spiritually in my time, while he shared with me the depth of his own experience with Christ.

The relationship that I had with this mentor is the primary reason why I found a reason to pursue spirituality at all. He shared with me the points of spirituality that were meaningful to him. He allowed me to share my questions without judgment.

It is clear to me that others would benefit from the same type of mentorship that helped shaped my spiritual life. This kind of mentorship can be found in the parent-child relationship.

But I believe that it is best practiced when found bi-directionally within the parent-child relationship. In fact, I believe that all mentorship is best served when it is bi-directional. Despite the fact that the best mentorship is always bi-directional, it is also best served when it is cross-generational. A definition of cross generational mentorship is that shared by the business organization insala.com which says:

A simple definition for cross-generational mentoring is pairing a person from one generation with a person from a different generation. The goal of this pairing is mutual learning and growth. It seems simple enough, but the part that differentiates this type mentoring from traditional mentoring is 'mutual learning and growth.' Cross-generational mentoring allows both participants to act as the mentor and the mentee simultaneously. They both need to learn from each other for the dynamic to work. Also, unlike traditional mentoring, cross-generational mentoring does not necessarily require an upper-level and a junior-level employee. Both participants can be uppers or juniors; they just need to be from different generations.²

By applying the insala.com definition, the principles of cross-generational mentorship can be applied to the spiritual relationships between parents and children in a manner that suggests mutual learning and growth. The mentorship is bi-directional. Parents help to establish core principles in spiritual development, while children evaluate and personalize those core principles. The child's evaluations and personalization cause parents to evolve the principles into their present context. This cross-generational mentorship happens while new spiritual applications develop to meet the needs of the current life circumstances. Without this kind of cross generational mentorship happening, the spiritual generation gap will continue and be a constant threat to the next generation finding value in the spiritual principles of the previous generation.

² “Benefits of Cross-Generational Mentoring,” Insala, accessed November 30, 2022, <https://www.insala.com/blog/what-are-the-benefits-of-cross-generational-mentoring>.

Unfortunately, there seems to be a vacuum in Christian parents taking that active role in their children's spiritual development. In the book, "Revolutionary Parenting: What the Research Shows," George Barna suggests that Christian parents have substituted societal norms for the principles of God and have determined that their children are "OK" if they align with society. Barna's correction is well said when he challenges the measurements of success by what God measures. "What does God measure? Our hearts. He created us to love, serve, and obey Him. So He studies the indicators of our devotion to Him. As parents, then, our job is to raise spiritual champions. That does not mean we are supposed to ignore the significance of developing our children's intellectual, emotional, and physical dimensions. But it suggests that we must see the bigger picture of God's priorities and raise our children in light of His standards, not ours or society's."³

When we constantly challenge ourselves to, "keep up with the Joneses," as we raise our children, it is easy to forget that the responsibility of our children's spiritual development is the first priority. Our children's spiritual development will be essential in determining whether our spiritual practices are transmitted to subsequent generations or are lost forever.

There is a still bigger picture to raising children. As we raise our children and help them to grow and develop their own spiritual awareness, we value those awakenings of our children and incorporate them into our own spiritual well-being. There is a spiritual Newton's Cradle that happens: We help our children grow spiritually; They have an awakening with God; and They expand our spiritual experiences. This Spiritual Cradle is vital to the life of the church while the

³ George Barna, *Revolutionary Parenting: What the Research Shows Really Works* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 2010), 19-20, Kindle.

church continues to strive to remain relevant to the next generation. It requires active parents and active children, both striving to connect spiritually.

For a long time, this has been a need within the Adventist Church. One of the founders of the Church, Ellen White wrote:

Our Great Hope Is Home Religion—Parents are asleep. Their children are going to destruction before their eyes, and the Lord would have His messengers present before the people, by precept and example, the necessity of home religion. Urge this matter home upon your congregations. Press the conviction of these solemn duties, so long neglected, home upon the conscience. This will break up the spirit of Pharisaism and resistance to the truth as nothing else can. Religion in the home is our great hope and makes the prospect bright for the conversion of the whole family to the truth of God.⁴

Ellen White suggests that the religion in the home is what will break up the spirit of Pharisaism. Ellen White defines the spirit of Pharisaism as a rigidity and lack of independent thought, which inexorably leads to legalism. By training up a child in spiritual practices and allowing them to have input and ability to grow in their own way, it forces the parents to break up that Pharisaism. This allows for independent expression from the child to be incorporated in the overall spiritual expression of the family. This will impact the church overall as the church members draw close as a family.

In *Families and Faith How Religion is Passed Down Across Generations*, Vern Bengsten communicated an interesting discovery. Contrary to common belief that the religiosity of children is growing less and less, the statistics found in a 35-year study between 1970-2005 indicate that is not true. In fact, the spirituality of the young adult children represented in the study were equally active and appreciative in four of the core aspects of spirituality. The four aspects surveyed were, “1. Religious Intensity, 2. Religious Participation, 3. Biblical Literalism,

⁴ Ellen G. White, *Child Guidance* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1954), CG 475.2, <https://m.egwwritings.org/en/book/8.2218#2243>.

4. Civic Religiosity.”⁵ Based on this study, it seems that the idea of the religious decline in America is less than we had originally thought. The explanation given to address this misnomer is:

[r]eligious affiliation today appears less central to core aspects of religiosity than, say, an individual’s feeling of the importance of religion or spirituality to his or her personal life. Moreover, affiliation with a particular church or religious organization can be dependent on characteristics that are somewhat peripheral to religious tradition: the personality of the minister or rabbi, the music or format of the service, and the stance of the denomination on social issues such as the ordination of women, abortion, or homosexuality. This is one explanation for the high rate of religious switching in America; denominational loyalty is lower today than in the past.⁶

What is gleaned from this study as it relates to the impact cross generational mentorship has on the relationships that happen in church is that parents seem to be successful in transmitting the value of spirituality but are less successful in allowing the next generation to express themselves in ways that meet their children’s need for spiritual growth at the local church level. Therefore, the younger generation seeks out worship expressions that are different from the local church in which they were raised. The study that I am conducting addresses how parents and children are willing to defend the spiritual values of each generation in a local church setting so that maturity in spirituality happens corporately in a local church.

Based on the conversations that I have had with the youth at the church I pastor as well as the children my wife and I have raised, some of the reasons why a young person might consider seeking out a different church is encountering perceived judgmental behavior and hypocrisy. As the minister of the church, I was able to ask those who were most critically judgmental if their children were active in church. For the most part, the response was no. The children didn’t have

⁵ Vern L. Bengtson, *Families and Faith: How Religion is Passed Down Across Generations* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), iii, Kindle.

⁶ Bengtson, *Families and Faith*, iii.

the same religious affiliation as the more judgmental parents did, if the children had any religious affiliation at all. This leads me to wonder if we, as a church, too often cater to a group of people who were unsuccessful in keeping their own children in the local church. We allow this same group to have unchecked influence on our own children's spiritual development in the church, because we don't want to create conflict with them. All the while, our children check out of their spiritual development because of lack of defense from parents to these Pharisaical influences at the local church.

In a local church, it is easy for conflict to develop over the method of how things are done. But if parents were to work for the development of their children's spiritual stability through their mentorship, they would discover that their children have very similar beliefs as their own. The nuances in the differences are so small that if parents were to listen to the reasons why our children value something, it would allow for parents to expand their own spirituality and draw that parent/child relationship to a closer and deeper one that uplifts God at the center. The church is intended for the community of believers to grow together and maintain the stability of the spirituality of the participants, both young and old, as society changes to meet new needs that arise through societal shifts. Cross generational mentorship allows for that Newton's Cradle to remain connected in the local church instead of one generation flying off the structure, never to return to a Christ-centered life. This takes tolerance for exploration in questions of our religiosity, which is the ability to express oneself in a community that values the person more than the expression of that person.

The prophecy of Joel 2:28 in the last days reads, "And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions."(ESV) I wonder when the

church will become a safe place for the Spirit to be poured out? The Scripture is very clear that the expressions of the Spirit are going to be reflective in a cross generational way. Sons and daughters, old men (and women) will both have expressions of the Spirit of Christ in different ways. The church needs to be the place where these expressions have support and value based on the love one has for one another.

When my children were teenagers, we had started a praise band for church. It was one of the greatest joys I have experienced as a parent, to participate in worship with my children at the local church. We might not have been very good, but what we lacked in talent, we made up in our ability to worship God together. Generations were coming together to worship. My children were on the lookout for new songs that spoke to the grace that we believe is found in Jesus and they would share with me their new discoveries and tell me what the song meant to them. I would listen to the song and hear it from their perspective and discover their growth in Christ was impacting my growth as I listened to music that was meaningful to them. The song would have depth for me because it had meaning to them. We then incorporated those songs into the worship experience that we had at church. This brought incredible joy to my wife and me to see our children worship genuinely. Even though they are now adults, they will call my wife and me and ask us to listen to a new song or new band and we will talk about the spiritual meaning they are receiving from it. God is calling His people to have expression that is not segregated by age, but that is distinguished by old and young coming together to worship.

Chapter 2.

A History of Youth Ministry and Mentorship in

The Seventh day Adventist Church

Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it.
Proverbs 22:6

So that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes.
Ephesians 4:14

I grew up in Seventh-day Adventist Church ministry programs that were designed to retain young people for service to Christ as we matured. There were children's ministry programs, youth programs, Pathfinders (a co-ed substitute for Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts), summer camp, mission trips, an education system that went from kindergarten to doctorate, and a plethora of other youth-oriented programs to keep young people connected and interested in the church and its mission. These programs and ministries to young people have been endorsed as vital to the structure of the church as a whole. In *Christian Education*, Ellen G. White counsels that youth should be the focus in ministry. She says:

Labor for the Young.—Very much has been lost to the cause of God by a lack of attention to the young. Ministers should form an acquaintance with the youth in their congregations. Many are reluctant to do this, but their neglect is a sin in the sight of Heaven. There are among us many who are not ignorant of our faith, yet whose hearts have never been touched by the power of divine grace. Can we who claim to be servants of God pass on day after day, week after week, indifferent to these souls who are out of Christ? If they should die in their sins, unwarned, their blood would be required at the unfaithful watchman's hands.

Why should not this labor for the youth in our borders be regarded as the highest kind of missionary work? It will require the most delicate tact, the most thoughtful consideration, the most earnest prayer that heavenly wisdom may be imparted. The youth are the objects of Satan's special attacks; but kindness, courtesy, that tender sympathy that flows from a heart filled with love to Jesus, will give you access to them. You may win their confidence so that they will listen to your words, and thus be saved from many a snare of the enemy.

When the youth give their hearts to God, your care for them should not cease. Lay some special responsibility upon them. Make them feel that they are expected to do something.

The Lord chooses them because they are strong. Teach them to labor in a quiet, unpretending way, for their young companions. Let different branches of the missionary work be laid out systematically, and let instruction and help be given, so that the young may learn to act a part. Thus, they will grow up to be workers for God.⁷

The motivation for working to develop the spirituality of youth in the Seventh day Adventist denomination has been high since 1852 with the publication of *The Youth Instructor*, authored by James White, who was one of the founders of the Seventh day Adventist denomination, along with Ellen G. White. As a result of that publication, two teenagers, Luther Warren and Harry Fenner, started the first Seventh day Adventist Youth Society, which was nine boys meeting in Luther Warren's bedroom.⁸

Robert Holbrook recognized, in his book, *The AY Story: A Brief History of Youth Ministry in the Seventh day Adventist Church*, that the development of the spiritual support of young people led to the success and spread of the mission.

The passion for evangelism that spawned leadership skills in teenagers Luther Warren and Harry Fenner seems to have been kindled or nurtured by their local congregation there in Hazelton. According to the Trustees Record Book of the Hazelton church, a special day of prayer for the salvation of the church's youth had been declared early in 1879. Luther's role in that church seems to have been one of influence even though he was young. His biography describes his leadership role with examples of his interest in the spiritual welfare of others, states that the church recognized his role as 'big brother' to the other youth attending and describes how he would invent little games to teach the other youth to be more alert to God's wonders of creation. It is in this milieu of adult concern and support for youth that these teens-initiated Adventism's first youth organization for evangelistic outreach, which seems to have included strengthening friendship bonds through social activities to which they could invite their non-Adventist friends.⁹

⁷ Ellen G. White, "Gospel Workers (1892/1893 Ed.)," Ellen G. White Writings, accessed November 30, 2022, <https://m.egwwritings.org/en/book/34.1193, GW92 278.2-279.2>.

⁸ Leo Ranzolin, "History of the Youth Department of the General Conference of Seventh-Day Adventists," ESDA, accessed November 30, 2022, <https://encyclopedia.adventist.org/article?id=6B3B#fnref7>.

⁹ General Conference Youth Ministries, *The AY Story* (Lincoln, NE: Advent Source, 2019), 2-3.

Since that meager beginning, the Adventist Church built up youth programs across the United States and expanded them to other countries. The *Encyclopedia of Seventh day Adventists* reports the significant developments of youth programs since that early time up to the present.

There are three people who were instrumental in the development of mentorship in the Seventh day Adventist youth programs that are necessary to highlight, namely Luther Warren, Arthur W. Spalding, and John H. Hancock.

Luther Warren

Luther was the young boy who wanted to start a program for other youth and began meeting in his room with nine others. But his interest in mentoring continued into a career for young people later in life:

While most Adventist ministers of that era preferred pastoral ministry or public evangelism, Warren became known as a revivalist and youth worker. Tall, austere, gracious, and eloquent, he was soon in demand as a public speaker across the United States. During the 1890s he and Goodloe Harper Bell fostered the development of church schools. Their efforts contributed to an increase in the number of schools from seven in 1890 to 594 by 1910. In addition, Luther and Belle established several orphanages for Adventist children.¹⁰

This duo of youth leadership impacted beyond the scope of their local mission. They led:

in a joint ministry that lasted half a century, Luther and Belle Warren labored in Michigan, Illinois, New York, Nebraska, California, Oregon, Washington and abroad in British Columbia, Mexico, and Jamaica. They established an orphanage in Paterson, New Jersey; taught 45 pupils at a church school in Council Bluffs, Iowa; and went to Jamaica to hold evangelistic meetings and train pastors in youth ministry.¹¹

Luther Warren was the originator of Sunshine Bands, which was a ministry with the purpose of visiting the sick and shut-ins with music and literature. As a result of the efforts of

¹⁰ Brian E. Strayer, “Warren, Luther Willis (1864–1940),” ESDA, accessed November 30, 2022, <https://encyclopedia.adventist.org/article?id=7AD1>.

¹¹ Strayer, “Warren, Luther Willis.”

Luther Warren and his wife, Belle, Sunshine Bands had been established in nearly every Seventh day Adventist Church in the country. Luther Warren also was the initiator of the first Bible Training School in Chicago. The students would receive training in how to give Bible studies as well as care for the needs of those who needed home nursing treatment. Luther Warren, after attending a convention led by A. G. Daniels, has been noted as saying, “I have expected that the time would come when our leading brethren would lay aside other burdens and responsibilities and give special time to the study of this work for our young people.” Later he continued with a theme still heard today: “Three things are absolutely necessary to have spiritual life: one is daily prayer; the second is the daily study of God’s Word; and the third is daily work for others.” Today we would summarize that view by our key words in youth ministry, “Salvation and Service.”¹²

Luther Warren was not only one who was gifted in connecting with youth as a preacher, but he had a way of connecting personally through:

Baptizing thousands of youths and mailed handwritten letters to thousands more; at one point his diary indicated that he owed 250 letters. His letters typically expressed joy at having a part in spreading the Adventist message and assured the recipient that he was concerned for their salvation and was praying for them. A man blessed with a phenomenal memory, near the end of his life Luther proved to his sister Lilla that he could recall the first and last names of 1000 young people who had become his friends at camp meetings and M.V. conventions.¹³

Luther and Belle Warren poured their whole life into the mentorship of youth and had a profound impact in the development of youth mentorship in the beginning of the Seventh day Adventist Church.

¹² General Conference Youth Ministries, *The AY Story*, 12.

¹³ Strayer, “Warren, Luther Willis.”

Arthur W. Spalding

Arthur W. Spalding was highly influential in the mentoring process of young people, and because of his passion for mentorship of young people, he was instrumental in being the key founder of several ministries that still function today. Spalding promoted education and his influence in schools as teacher, and principle, were always coupled with the recognition that he had natural influence in the lives of youth. He dedicated all he was to “family governance,” especially as it related to educational training.

In 1908, while at Bethel, Spalding published several articles in the Review elaborating on his conviction, derived from his study of Ellen White’s writings on Christian education, that the ideal school should be patterned after the home. Doing this, he contended, required schools small enough so that teachers could form an individual relationship with each student, and instruct them through benevolent parental guidance and companionship, not as taskmasters.¹⁴

Spalding promoted family governance as the method of God’s love. He said, “The institution which God has set as the model, after which all schools were to be patterned, is the Home [sic], the family.” A home government cannot be totally democratic, for a successful democracy, “must be composed of self-governing adults.” To be self-governing, a person must pass through a process, “of discipline and education which is nondemocratic, the process of parental government and guidance.” As the youth became more mature and self- governing, parents were to grant them more liberty and responsibility. He further stated that the

¹⁴ John Casillas and Alice R. Voorheis, “Spalding, Arthur Whitefield (1877–1953),” ESDA, accessed November 30, 2022, <https://encyclopedia.adventist.org/article?id=6A7D&highlight=kellogg>.

undergirding philosophy of family government in student/teacher relationships is “the science of God's love.”¹⁵

Some of the high points of Arthur Spalding's influence on mentorship to young people were seen in his willingness to bring other children into his own home and include them in his family unit, treating them equal to his own children. They responded to him and his wife as father and mother. Arthur Spalding described the impact on students in a letter to Ellen White, “The results of the home training upon their characters, in making them more earnest, devoted, and capable, helped us in endorsing the teaching that runs all through the book, ‘Education,’ that the proper home is the ideal school. This is not a theory of ours: it is a truth presented by the Spirit of Prophecy and proved in our own experience.”¹⁶

Because of God's love, Spalding found the good and the beautiful only in God's order of things. consequently, he maintained that parent education and child training must be rooted in the revealed will of God. As Jesus modeled his teachings in his own life and being, in the same way ‘the father's and mother's own attitude . . . [would] chiefly affect the child.’ Therefore, companionship was the main methodology Spalding recommended to the parents for child training. In 1912 he wrote, ‘If we come out of the high, thin atmosphere of theory, and seek for solid practical causes of failure and disappointment, we shall find . . . that . . . *we have not learned to live with our children.*’ He carried these concepts with him throughout his career while others were addressing ‘problems that arise from our having to live with children.’ The natural environment of God's creation became the most valuable classroom, with art, music, and ethics following God's natural order of things. Through companionship, the children could experientially assimilate the ways of life and truth from their parents. In so doing, the prophecy of Malachi 4:5 and 6

¹⁵ Allan William Freed, “Arthur Whitefield Spalding: A Study of His Life and Contributions to Family-Life Education in the Seventh-Day Adventist Church” (PhD Dissertation, Andrews University, 1995), <https://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1377&context=dissertations>, 1995.

¹⁶ Casillas and Voorheis, “Spalding, Arthur Whitefield.”

(the turning of the hearts of the parents to the children and of the children to their parents) would be fulfilled.¹⁷

Arthur W. Spalding led the first camp program for youth in 1919, calling his group Mission Scouts. “A. W. Spalding, a man who was a true mentor for the youth of his church, was living in Tennessee around 1919 and organized a small group of boys into a little club he called, ‘Mission Scouts.’ They went off camping on occasion and were involved in ‘doing good deeds’ in their community. They even put together a pledge and law to live by.”¹⁸

Little did Arthur W. Spalding know that later his Mission Scouts idea would take off and develop into a much larger program that would span the globe. The Seventh day Adventist local conferences purchased several pieces of land that could be used by the church youth groups for such camps. As a captivating storyteller and preacher, Arthur Spalding spoke at one such camp: “in (1928) in Southern California. Spalding found himself telling a story of the adventures of one of America’s early Western explorers known as Mountain Men, named John Fremont. He carried the nickname, ‘Pathfinder.’ The nickname caught on; the camp was dubbed ‘Pathfinder Camp.’ It became the name of a local church junior club directed by John McKim. Eventually, it became the name of the club that put all the various pieces together that were developed over the previous couple decades thus transforming the JMV Society into today’s Pathfinder Club.”¹⁹

¹⁷ Allan William Freed, “Arthur W. Spalding: Leadership during Cultural Upheaval,” *The Journal of Applied Christian Leadership*, January 18, 2021, <https://jacl.andrews.edu/arthur-w-spalding-leadership-during-cultural-upheaval/>.

¹⁸“In the Beginning: Pre-1920,” in *The Pathfinder Story*, Adventist Youth Ministries, accessed December 1, 2022, <https://www.gcyyouthministries.org/wp-content/uploads/Pathfinder-Story.pdf>, 4.

¹⁹“In the Beginning,” 6.

Arthur Spalding's passion for the youth led him to have conviction beyond words. His main push was the family governance God has instilled through creation and scripture. As a result of this passion, countless youth have been inspired. This was well demonstrated when Spalding said:

We may preach year in and year out, we may bring men, women, and children, 'into the truth,' we may continue to educate in secular and religious matters in church school and training school; but unless we look into the home life we shall fail to find the secret of that instability, that lack of perseverance and energy which has been the bane of our Southern converts; and unless we reach the home life and train right there in Christian principle and living, we shall fail to find the most comprehensive remedy...But little can be taught by precept,—students and families must come in contact with the living of the principles, for a long enough time to eradicate some evils and imbibe some good; and a school which is a home is best fitted for that work.²⁰

John H Hancock

John Henry Hancock was born in 1917, at the same time that the previous two leaders mentioned were establishing youth ministry mentorship as a priority in our church. At the age of 22, John Hancock graduated from Pacific Union College, a Seventh day Adventist institution, and started his ministry with his new wife, Helen. For a brief time, Hancock served in the Northern California Conference, but soon after was called to serve in Santa Ana. Prior to John Hancock's service in Santa Ana, John McKim started a club for young people patterned after the Boy Scouts in Anaheim, California. As a result of McKim's efforts to build a club for youth that would align with the tenants of the Seventh day Adventist faith, the club in Anaheim quickly grew and spread to other nearby Seventh day Adventist churches. This club for youth developed into what is now known as Pathfinders. The growth of Pathfinders was the result of the collective efforts from many members of the corporate church, each having the desire to serve youth and to mentor them into a loving relationship with Jesus.

²⁰ Casillas and Voorheis, "Spalding, Arthur Whitefield."

The basic history of the Pathfinders is described by the website clubministries.org in this way:

The first Pathfinder Club of record was in Anaheim, California directed by John McKim and Willa Steen. This club began in the late 1920's and ran through the 1930's. In 1944 McKim died and the Steens had moved. In 1930 Lester and Ione Martin with co-directors Theron & Ethel Johnston began a club in Santa Ana, California. Both first clubs were in the Southeastern California Conference and encouraged by Youth Director Elder Guy Mann and his associate Laurance A. Skinner. For several years there were no clubs of record. In 1946 John H. Hancock, then the youth director for Southeastern California Conference got a club going in Riverside, California. John designed the Pathfinder triangle emblem and got a ministerial student, Francis Hunt to direct the club. Both John and his wife Helen Hancock taught honors. By 1947-48 Southern California Conference began having Pathfinder clubs - the first at Glendale, with Lawrence Paulson as director. About that same time, the Central California Conference, under the direction of Youth Director Henry T. Bergh, began their Pathfinder program -- starting 23 clubs that first year. Beginning with the God-directed program, called Pathfinder Clubs, in California, the General Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist church adopted the program. It thus, in 1950, became an official worldwide organization of the Adventist church, and grew rapidly.²¹

John Hancock was very gifted in music and art and was able to serve the youth from those skills. He was gifted playing the accordion which he used to connect with young people around the world. I had the privilege to speak with Dottie Versteeg, John Hancock's daughter. Dottie spoke highly of her father and shared that John Hancock gathered the collective youth-minded people and organized them into a corporate ministry program that gave structure to the overall focus of youth ministry. This developed into the worldwide program now known as Pathfinders. Dottie Versteeg mentioned that her father was always focused on youth and uplifting youth ministry as his priority. Known for his musical skills, John Hancock would play and write songs, many of which are still being played today in Pathfinder clubs around the world. "Hancock also composed seven choruses to be sung at Youth Congresses throughout the world:

²¹"Pathfinder History: NAD," Club Ministries - North American Division, May 20, 2020, <https://www.clubministries.org/pathfinders/pathfinders-history/>.

Safe In His Hands, All Of My Heart, To The Outposts!, Christ Is Coming, We'll March Along Together, Make Us Ready, Follow Me (jointly with Lowell Litten), and, probably best known, I'll Share My Faith.”²²

Dixie Plata (formerly Biggar), Pathfinder historian for the Seventh day Adventist denomination, remembered when John came and played music for one of the camps that she attended. She shared that she, “especially enjoyed when Elder John H. Hancock, a young youth director, led the music program with his accordion.”²³

John Hancock was asked to serve in the General Conference to oversee the Pathfinder program for the world church. In this position he served to oversee the music programs for the large events. As Dottie remembered, “My dad had a way with being a regular person, not someone who was wanting to be elevated on a pedestal. When he would serve for the General Conference [of Seventh day Adventists], the youth would audition to play music for a large event, [and] my dad made the young people so comfortable with singing that they wouldn't believe they would be capable of leading that way. That's who my dad was. He had the natural ability to make you feel comfortable in who God called you to be.”

These three individuals transitioned the focus of ministry to be inclusive of youth. The goal of passing on the spirituality to the next generation was the purpose of each one. This led them to invest in the lives of thousands, leading the youth into having an active faith in Jesus Christ.

Effects of Mentorship and Youth Retention

²² Dan Shultz, “Hancock, John Henry (1917–2001),” ESDA, accessed November 30, 2022, <https://encyclopedia.adventist.org/article?id=39F2&highlight=ministry>.

²³ “Story of the Adventist Youth Ministries Museum,” Adventist Youth Ministries Museum, July 27, 2018, <https://aymmuseum.org/ypdlc-story/>.

In order to further analyze the questions posed herein, it is vital to reflect on the retention of youth in the Seventh day Adventist Church. What are the factors that have the greatest impact in youth remaining committed to their faith and the local community church? Roger Dudley, the former director for the Institute of Church Ministries, who specializes in statistical research, conducted a ten-year study to assess “Why Our Teenagers Leave the [Seventh day Adventist] Church.” Within this research, Dudley has concluded that there are predictors that will impact youth in remaining committed to a local congregation. Based on the findings in this study, Dudley has recommended seven commitments the church must emphasize to address the retention level of young people in the church:

1. Encourage solid Christian homes in which parents set a good example and families worship together. 2. Make Adventist Christian education available to all our youth, especially in the first 10 grades. 3. Get our young people involved in the life and activities of our congregations. 4. Decide which lifestyle standards are crucial to the Christian experience and present them in ways that youth will see them as worthwhile and can be supportive of them. 5. Foster a strong devotional life in our young people, demonstrating how to make personal prayer and the study of the Bible rich and meaningful. 6. Encourage our families to worship together in ways that are satisfying and meaningful. 7. Do everything possible to help our youth gain a positive view of the local church and the denomination. Making this picture a reality everywhere in our homes, school, and congregations presents the best hope for a future church that includes this generation.²⁴

Dudley suggests that the method to make this kind of focus area in the local church would be best approached through intergenerational dialog. He says, “These concerns are not likely to be solved by administrative fiat. Perhaps the answer lies in more intergenerational dialogue. A series of discussion groups involving all segments of a congregation might be useful in separating timeless principles from cultural applications and in determining new relevant applications of the essential core of historic doctrine... This can be accomplished by, “providing

²⁴ Roger Dudley, *Why Our Teenagers Leave the Church* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 2000), 91-92.

a climate of warmth and acceptance in homes and local congregations and by the presence of caring adults in positions of religious training.”²⁵

There is a positive connection between Christian education and the retention level of young people in maintaining their spirituality into adulthood. Historically speaking, I make the proposal that A. W. Spalding was correct in his push for family governance in the educational process as being one of the primary impacts into the longevity of spirituality in youth. A study done in 1990 demonstrates the effectiveness of Adventist Education in comparison to public education on the retention of young people in the church.

In 1990, Robert Rice carried out a longitudinal study in which he compared baptized Adventist youth in southern California who graduated from public high schools and those who graduated from Adventist academies. Thirteen years after graduation, 37 percent of those who had graduated from public high schools remained in the church, compared with 77 percent of those who had graduated from Adventist academies. Rice also found that those who had graduated from Adventist academies were twice as likely to pay tithe (50 percent vs. 26 percent), twice as likely to attend an Adventist church service regularly (59 percent vs. 32 percent), twice as inclined to educate their own children in an Adventist school (59 percent vs. 29 percent), and nearly three times more likely to have married an Adventist spouse (78 percent vs. 27 percent), compared to those who graduated from a public high school.²⁶

Reviewing the results of this study, it is easy to conclude that mentoring young people into active participants, equal to longstanding members, and allowing them to invest their energies into the corporate community, will result in their allegiance to the local church. This kind of mentorship doesn't rest solely at the K-12 level of education but needs to be seen in the local church level as well. Young people need to be incorporated to partner with older people in the development of their vitality to the edification of the church community. This will continue their Christian Education by providing application in the local church community.

²⁵ Dudley, *Why Our Teenagers*, 130-131.

²⁶John Wesley Taylor V, “Joining and Remaining,” *Journal of Adventist Education* No. 3 (April-June 2017), accessed December 1, 2022, <https://jae.adventist.org/en/2017.3.8>.

Ministry programs designed to nurture youth into adulthood, through active relationships with both young and old, have had a positive impact in how those youth project themselves into the future of spiritual community. At the Pathfinder Camporee 2019²⁷:

A study was conducted by the Institute of Church Ministry, in conjunction with the Center for Youth Evangelism, at the Chosen International Pathfinder Camporee (CIC) held in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, in 2019, which included 1,024 participants, with a total of 993 surveys completed. One of the survey questions asked young people to respond to the statement, 'I intend to remain an active Adventist when I am on my own.' A majority (85%) of respondents somewhat agreed or strongly agreed that they intend to remain in the Adventist Church as adults.²⁸

Drawing the conclusion that this study was conducted at the largest event Pathfinders has in North America, coupled with the fact that all participants were participating in Pathfinders, I can conclude that the active participation in Pathfinders had a profound impact in those young people's projection of spirituality with the Seventh day Adventist Church. In short, most young people who participate in Pathfinders see themselves remaining Seventh day Adventist when they become adults. When the concept of Pathfinders was developed, initially by A.W Spalding, and further established by John Hancock, I am sure they were unaware of the dramatic effect that ministry would have on the commitment level of youth to the Seventh day Adventist Church in 2019.

As a result of the decisions made by the early leadership of the Seventh day Adventist movement, to be inclusive of mentorship in ministry through Family Governance driven education and programs that continue that education in the local church through Pathfinders,

²⁷ Pathfinder Camporee is an international gathering of Pathfinder organizations, resulting in upward of 25,000 Pathfinder members from around the globe coming together for one week.

²⁸ "Pathfinders' Views of Their Longevity within the Adventist Church," Adventist Research, May 18, 2021, <https://www.adventistresearch.info/pathfinders-views-their-longevity-within-adventist-church/>.

mentorship has a firm foundation for young people to connect with older people and grow spiritually as active members in the Seventh day Adventist Church.

Chapter 3.

Spiritual Practices That are Important for Faith

Development in the Seventh Day Adventist Church

Little children, make sure no one deceives you; the one who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous; 1 John 3:7

Therefore, brethren, be all the more diligent to make certain about His calling and choosing you; for as long as you practice these things, you will never stumble; 2 Peter 1:10

The things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you. Philippians 4:9

As we investigate what practices are important to spiritual development for youth in the Seventh day Adventist Church, it is important to realize that we are all on a journey, striving to make God the center of our lives. So, whether older or younger, having spiritual practices are a vital part of continual growth. The Seventh day Adventist Church has added that continual spiritual growth as one of the church's fundamental beliefs.

In this new freedom in Jesus, we are called to grow into the likeness of His character, communing with Him daily in prayer, feeding on His Word, meditating on it and on His providence, singing His praises, gathering together for worship, and participating in the mission of the Church. We are also called to follow Christ's example by compassionately ministering to the physical, mental, social, emotional, and spiritual needs of humanity. As we give ourselves in loving service to those around us and in witnessing to His salvation, His constant presence with us through the Spirit transforms every moment and every task into a spiritual experience. (1 Chron. 29:11; Ps. 1:1, 2; 23:4; 77:11, 12; Matt. 20:25-28; 25:31-46; Luke 10:17-20; John 20:21; Rom. 8:38, 39; 2 Cor. 3:17, 18; Gal. 5:22-25; Eph. 5:19, 20; 6:12-18; Phil. 3:7-14; Col. 1:13, 14; 2:6, 14, 15; 1 Thess. 5:16-18, 23; Heb. 10:25; James 1:27; 2 Peter 2:9; 3:18; 1 John 4:4.)²⁹

²⁹ "Fundamental Beliefs of Seventh-Day Adventists," Adventist Archives, accessed November 30, 2022, <https://www.adventistarchives.org/sdafundamentalbeliefs>.

Growing in Christ was the most recent fundamental belief to be added to the list of fundamental beliefs of the Seventh day Adventist Church. This indicates a continuing value that the church places on spiritual growth and to the spiritual wellbeing of its members. “In the year 2005, sensing that a new fundamental belief was needed, delegates to the GC Session held in St. Louis, Missouri that year, voted the statement, ‘Growing in Christ’ which was added to the Fundamental Beliefs, bringing the total to 28.”³⁰

As we address the issues that describe growing in Christ, we must recognize that the Seventh day Adventist Church acknowledges that this growing takes place in a community of faith, a church body. Therefore, all members are fundamentally recommended to continue growing because Christ is our example, and His character is our goal which will only be complete at the second coming of Jesus. I mention this principle because as we grow older in a community of faith, we sometimes feel that we have achieved a maturity level in faith that replaces any need for continued growth in Christ. The premise of my thesis is that, as older mature adults work with younger people in a community of faith, they can support one another in their own spiritual growth. As reflected earlier, Newton’s Cradle reflects the way this works. Spiritual energy is transferred from one to another through mentorship which causes continual growth. After the recipient receives spiritual mentorship, they incorporate the new level of spirituality in ways that are applicable to their generation’s receptivity. The recipient then relates back to the mentor, who now grows in reflection of receiving their spiritual insights. This causes the mentor to continue to grow in Christ as they reflect on how the next generation responds to

³⁰ Ted N.C. Wilson, “History of the 28 Fundamental Beliefs,” Adventist News Network, General Conference, January 6, 2022, <https://adventist.news/news/history-of-the-28-fundamental-beliefs>.

spiritual insights. By my assessment, cross-generational mentorship must be how continual growth in Christ takes place within the context of community.

The areas of spirituality that I have considered are as follows: **Prayer; Study of Bible; Meditation on Christ; Music; Church Worship; Fellowship, Sharing Testimony, and Giving of Oneself.** These eight areas of spirituality are reflective of what it means to continue growing in Christ, within the meaning of the newest fundamental belief.

Prayer

As an explanation of prayer's effect on the continued growth in Christ, the editor of, "The Gospel Coalition," says, "Every day we are becoming either more like Jesus or less like him. Spiritual formation is the name for that process by which Christians, in union with Christ and guided by the Holy Spirit, become conformed both internally and externally to the character of Christ for the purpose of communion with God."³¹ The way prayer affects the life of communities and families is to unite the individual to God and one another. The way we internally relate to the character of Christ is revealed in the way we externally act from that internal conformity. This is seen primarily and most effectively in the family unit. Ellen White in *Adventist Home*, says:

Affection cannot be lasting, even in the home circle, unless there is a conformity of the will and disposition to the will of God. All the faculties and passions are to be brought into harmony with the attributes of Jesus Christ. If the father and mother in the love and fear of God unite their interests to have authority in the home, they will see the necessity of much prayer, much sober reflection. And as they seek God, their eyes will be opened to see heavenly messengers present to protect them in answer to the prayer of faith.³²

³¹ Joe Carter et al., "How Prayer Affects Our Spiritual Formation," The Gospel Coalition, January 17, 2017, <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/how-prayer-affects-our-spiritual-formation/>.

³² Ellen G. White, "The Adventist Home," Ellen G. White Writings, accessed November 30, 2022, <https://m.egwwritings.org/en/book/128.1419?hl=necessity%2Bof%2Bprayer#1439>.

Prayer is vital to the spiritual life growth of both the individual as well as the family units that make up the community of Christ. When Robert Schuller invited Mother Teresa on his television program several years ago, “He asked her if there was one message, she would like to convey to all those viewers. Her response ‘Yes, tell them to pray. And tell them to teach their children to pray.’”³³

Bible Study

As vital as food and water are to the nourishment of the body, so the Word of God is nourishment to the soul. We place ourselves under God’s directives and can hear the kinds of directives God would say in our impressions from prayer and when we are in tune to Him through scripture. The principles revealed in the Bible are to be lived out in the home. This requires daily study and sharing and dialogue with the whole family concerning what is to be discovered.

In the education of your children lay not the grand truths of the Bible to one side, supposing that the Sabbath school and the minister will do your neglected work. The Bible is not too sacred and sublime to be opened daily and studied diligently. The truths of the word of God are to be brought into contact with the supposed little things of life. If rightly regarded they will brighten the common life, supplying motives for obedience and principles for the formation of a right character.³⁴

Far too often, parents with good intentions will try to become preachers to their children and lecturers as to the areas that need correction, making the Bible a tool of discipline. As a minister, though I have the desire to raise my children to know God, I would often neglect Bible study in the home because of the business of teaching Bible at church. The Lord revealed to me that my children should not be forced to be church members for them to learn who God is from

³³ Robert G. Bruce and Debra Fulghum Bruce, *Becoming Spiritual Soulmates With Your Child* (Nashville, Tennessee: Broadman and Holman Publishers/1996), 66.

³⁴ Ellen G. White, “The Adventist Home.” Ellen G. White Writings, accessed November 30, 2022, <https://m.egwwritings.org/en/book/128.835>.

me. I should be prioritizing their spiritual growth at home. Upon realizing this, I called a family meeting and apologized for my neglect. My wife and I immediately changed some routines and started to simply read the Bible to our children while they were eating breakfast before school. Rather than trying to preach what the Bible is saying, we would just read to them the stories. Afterward we would pray. I find it interesting that their questions would come from hearing the Word, instead of from what they are hearing me say the Word says. This approach to sharing the Word of God with them stuck deeper into their memory than any sermon I have ever preached. They remember what was read at breakfast more than they remember my sermons. That is both humbling and comforting.

According to 2 Timothy 3:16, “All scripture is God breathed and profitable for teaching, for rebuke, for correction, for instruction of righteousness. That the man [and woman] of God may be complete, fully equipped for every good work.”(ESV) The closeness of the Word of God needs to be Him bringing His breath in me. Robert and Debra Bruce, in, *Becoming Spiritual Soulmates with your Child*, quote Katherine Mansfield as saying, “I feel so bitterly, that I have never known these writings before. They ought to be part of my very breathing.”

³⁵Katherine Mansfield didn’t have the Bible until later in life and wrote in her journal that she wished she had scripture earlier in life.

The Bible must be the renewed spiritual breath received daily from God.

Meditation on Christ

Meditation on the profound grace of Christ is, for me, a necessary part of my regular spiritual growth. I am saved from something from which only Christ can save me. It is His life

³⁵ Bruce and Bruce, *Becoming Spiritual Soulmates*, 29.

that rescues me and my need for Him is eternal. Meditation on Christ causes me to have continual reflection on who I am and who He is. Meditation changes my very thought pattern:

Changing the Thought Pattern—When the mind has been long permitted to dwell only on earthly things, it is a difficult matter to change the habits of thought. That which the eye sees and the ear hears too often attracts the attention and absorbs the interest. But if we would enter the city of God and look upon Jesus and His glory, we must become accustomed to beholding Him with the eye of faith here. The words and the character of Christ should be often the subject of our thoughts and of our conversation, and each day some time should be especially devoted to prayerful meditation upon these sacred themes.³⁶

Growing up, I was not accustomed to meditation practices. The subject was always met with skepticism about meditation being something of the mystical order of things. My first experience with meditation was in a class taken at Claremont School of Theology, “Creating a Personal Space for Grounding and Renewing Spiritual Practice,” with Dr. Frank Rogers. In the class, Dr. Rogers encouraged us to create the space for meditation to take place. As I practiced this new concept of meditation, I realized that it allowed me to slow down the “need-to-get-things-done” mindset and allowed for me to hear God direct my attention to who I am in Him.

Too often, we interpret the value of who we are based on the merits of our efforts. We will denigrate ourselves through our perceived failures and then determine whether we are qualified to be loved by God based on whether we would accept ourselves knowing our failures. Meditation on Christ allows for the reflection on what He has done for us. This enables us to separate from a mindset in which we often pass over His works quickly and miss the value of who Jesus is to us personally. In meditation on Him, my thought patterns are redirected to His value that was placed on me and I experience the gospel of Christ renewed because it’s not about my successes or failures. It’s about His success to love me despite my efforts.

³⁶ Ellen G. White, “February 8, 1881,” *The Review and Herald*, Ellen G. White Writings, accessed November 30, 2022, 91-92, <https://m.egwwritings.org/en/book/821.3681>.

Music

Singing praises to God has the profound effect of changing the spiritual environment which we inhabit. In Southern California, it is part of our lives to spend long times on the roads and freeways. In my younger years, I would listen to music while driving and my selection of songs primarily was not selected with the intention of creating a peaceful environment. As a result, I fell into road rage very easily. I had a mentor share with me that maybe if I listened to different music while driving, I would be less reactive to the mistakes of other people's driving. I tried it and found that what I listen to in the car could help me react to things on the road differently. Music changed my environment. I had less rage. I was more compassionate to others. The ride was more enjoyable as I would sing along, praising God on the trip.

Scripture directs us, at Psalm 33:1-3, "Sing for joy in the Lord, O you righteous ones; Praise is becoming to the upright. Give thanks to the Lord with the lyre; Sing praises to Him with a harp of ten strings. Sing to Him a new song; Play skillfully with a shout of joy."(ESV) It is stated like this at Ephesians 5:19-20, "Speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father[.]" (ESV). These scriptures testify to the importance of music in the spiritual growth of people. Music grows us and is part of the communication we have with God and with others as we praise.

I am reminded of the story in Acts 16:25 where Paul and Silas were in prison and after having been beaten were put in the inner chamber. They started to sing. When they started singing praises to God, something supernatural happened. An earthquake happened and rattled the gates of their prison open and the chains that held them captive fell off. The music Paul and

Silas sang changed the environment and provided an opportunity for the jailor to give his life to the Lord.

Music is that universal language that allows for people to be directed to God and connected to one another where change can happen. These changes in our relationship to our environment transform our mundane circumstances into a space of reverence where we can experience God, not only for the individual but also for those in the vicinity. “When one sings out of devotion, he pays more attention to the content and the meaning, both because he lingers more on the words, and because, as Augustine says, each affection of our spirit, according to its variety, has its own appropriate measure in the voice and singing, by some hidden correspondence wherewith it is stirred. The same is true of the hearers, for even if they do not understand what is sung, they understand why it is sung, namely for God's honor, and this is enough to arouse their devotion (S. T., II-II, 91, 2 ad 3).”³⁷

Church Worship

Scripture clearly gives direction for God’s people to come together and worship. In Hebrews 10:24-25, Paul encourages the congregation to continue to meet together. “And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.”(ESV)

The need to come together in worship has been long-standing throughout the history of the church. Corporate worship is part of the spiritual growth of the individual members of the

³⁷ Basil Cole, “Music and Spirituality: EWTN,” EWTN Global Catholic Television Network, accessed November 30, 2022, <https://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/library/music-and-spirituality-11168>.

church. Ellen White, echoes the necessity of coming together as a church family. She says, in *Christian Experience and Teaching*:

To His church, Christ has given ample facilities, that He may receive a large revenue of glory from His redeemed, purchased possession. The church, being endowed with the righteousness of Christ, is His depository, in which the wealth of His mercy, His love, His grace, is to appear in full and final display. The declaration in His intercessory prayer, that the Father's love is as great toward us as toward Himself, the only-begotten Son, and that we shall be with Him where He is, forever one with Christ and the Father, is a marvel to the heavenly host, and it is their great joy. The gift of His Holy Spirit, rich, full, and abundant, is to be to His church as an encompassing wall of fire, which the powers of hell shall not prevail against. In their untainted purity and spotless perfection, Christ looks upon His people as the reward of all His suffering, His humiliation, and His love, and the supplement of His glory, —Christ, the great center from which radiates all glory. “Blessed are they which are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb.”³⁸

If the church corporate is the reflection of Christ's reward for all that God did in the salvation of mankind, then coming together causes a participation in that glorious display of His grace. This calling to be a part of the corporate church experience necessitates that all people be receptive to that call to be included. Those who would consider themselves the protector of the sanctity of Christ's body, The Church, must realize that Christ made possible that the undeserving are to be fully received, making His grace the glory on display to the world. Those who are complete sinners find that they are accepted by Christ's blood through the church. Therefore, worshiping together is the space where Christ is experienced fully in grace.

Fellowship

We are called to cherish love. Romans 12:10 states, “Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honor preferring one another.”(ESV) Form a habit of speaking words of cheerful hope and courage, words of love and appreciation, that will bind hearts together. 1 John 1:7, says, “If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one

³⁸ Ellen G. White, “Christian Experience and Teachings,” Ellen G. White Writings, accessed November 30, 2022, <https://m.egwwritings.org/en/book/11.964#979>.

with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.”(ESV) Being able to have fellowship with one another is the sustaining aspect of Christian Community. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, in his book *Life Together*, says regarding the value of Christian fellowship, “It is easily forgotten that the fellowship of Christian brethren is a gift of grace, a gift of the Kingdom of God that any day may be taken from us, that the time that still separates us from utter loneliness may be brief indeed. Therefore, let him who until now has had the privilege of living a common Christian life with other Christian’s praise God’s grace from the bottom of his heart. Let him thank God on his knees and declare: It is grace, nothing but grace, that we are allowed to live in community with Christian brethren.”³⁹

The newly developed Christian Community that was established in the 1st century prioritized the fellowship of the community as one of the spiritual practices that held them together. Acts 2:42-43 says, “And they devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles.” (ESV) This devotion that they established as equal to the teaching allows for the teaching to not merely be head knowledge, but also experiential knowledge through the fellowship of others in the group. Their spiritual growth was supported by one another and caused a confirmation in their faith. Fellowship has the lasting effect on the teaching because it is supported by the positive relationships of those who love one another and encourage their close engagement to the community of faith. Fellowship is at the core of family connection and is vital in creating the environment for spiritual growth.

Sharing Testimony

³⁹ Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Samuel Wells, and John W. Doberstein, *Life Together* (London: SCM Press, 2015)

Psalm 66:5, 16, invites us to “Come and see what God has done: he is awesome in his deeds toward the children of man... Come and hear, all you who fear God, and I will tell what he has done for my soul.”(ESV) Sharing your testimony with others has the dual value of allowing those with whom you are sharing to experience your story, and it also allows you to re-experience the power of God in your life.

Ellen White admonishes the church with this counsel:

The standard of truth may be raised by humble men and women; and the youth, and even children, may be a blessing to others, by revealing what the truth has done for them. God will use the most feeble instruments if they are wholly submitted to him. He can work through them to reach souls to whom the minister could not obtain access. There are the highways and byways to be searched. With your Bible in your hand, with your heart warm and glowing with the love of God, you may go out and tell others your experience; you may make known to them the truth that has impressed your heart, praying with faith that God will make your efforts successful in their salvation. Communicate light, and you will have more light to communicate. Thus, you may become laborers together with God.⁴⁰

In this directive, you see the promise that in communicating light, we will have more light to communicate. In other words, through the process of sharing the testimony of what God has done in your life, or as Peter put it in 1 Peter 3:15, “giving a reason for the hope that you have,” you will continue to see and experience more light from God. Sharing your testimony will result in you having more reasons to share your faith. Your Spirituality will continue to grow as you develop the ability to tune in to God’s work in your life and the ability to share those areas that you have encountered God, transforms both you and those with whom you share the stories. X

⁴⁰ Ellen G. White, “January 12, 1897,” Ellen G. White Writings, accessed November 30, 2022, <https://m.egwwritings.org/en/book/821.15581>.

Giving of Yourself

Giving of yourself to the community of faith with your finances, as well as your service, connects your acts of giving to God. There is a relationship that happens between God and you when you commit to Him your money and efforts to the community in which you participate. God responds to these kind of acts as, “All in,” efforts. In Malachi 3:8-12, we see how God responds to His children through their willingness to participate and the giving of themselves through tithe, offerings, and service. “Will man rob God? Yet you are robbing me. But you say, ‘How have we robbed you?’ In your tithes and contributions. You are cursed with a curse, for you are robbing me, the whole nation of you. Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. And thereby put me to the test, says the LORD of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you a blessing until there is no more need. I will rebuke the devourer for you, so that it will not destroy the fruits of your soil, and your vine in the field shall not fail to bear, says the LORD of hosts. Then all nations will call you blessed, for you will be a land of delight, says the LORD of hosts.”(ESV)

The relationship that is promised through the giving of oneself opens the windows of heaven, blessings, and protection that cause you to be established in the land. These promises mean that because of giving myself as spiritual development, I am able to see God’s provisions revealed in my daily workings. Through the process of giving oneself, they are able to express gratitude to God who gave Himself completely through Jesus Christ. Ellen White comments in *Counsels on Stewardship*:

However large, however small the possessions of any individual, let him remember that it is his only in trust. For his strength, skill, time, talents, opportunities, and means, he must render an account to God. This is an individual work; God gives to us, that we may become like Him, generous, noble, beneficent, by giving to others. Those who, forgetful of their

divine mission, seek only to save or to spend in the indulgence of pride or selfishness, may secure the gains and pleasures of this world; but in God's sight, estimated by their spiritual attainments, they are poor, wretched, miserable, blind, naked. When rightly employed, wealth becomes a golden bond of gratitude and affection between man and his fellow men, and a strong tie to bind his affections to his Redeemer. The infinite gift of God's dear Son calls for tangible expressions of gratitude from the recipients of His grace. He who receives the light of Christ's love, is thereby placed under the strongest obligation to shed the blessed light upon other souls in darkness.⁴¹

These eight spiritual disciplines allow for Christians to establish continual spiritual development in their lives as they reach for spiritual maturity. And these same spiritual disciplines are the areas in which mentorship, when communicated with honesty, can unite both young and old as they support one another in their Christian spiritual growth.

⁴¹White, "January 12, 1897."

Chapter 4.

Generational Divide Over Spiritual Practices

Romans 16:17-18 ESV *I appeal to you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions and create obstacles contrary to the doctrine that you have been taught; avoid them. For such persons do not serve our Lord Christ, but their own appetites, and by smooth talk and flattery they deceive the hearts of the naive.*

The Thousand Oaks Seventh day Adventist Church has struggled dealing with the generational divide for many years. According to the testimony of church members, the church has gone through several refocuses on youth and young adult ministries, followed by areas of deep conflict regarding spiritual disciplines. This would lead to a separation of the young and old. This separation would eventually lead to comparison and criticism to the point that the young people would ultimately leave the church or join a different church nearby.

In 1998, the Thousand Oaks church started a youth church in the fellowship hall of the church. The new church called itself, “The Place” to create a trendy branding for Seventh day Adventists who did not feel like they had a place at any of the churches in the area. The Place focused their ministry to have quality music, relevant messages, and was very engaging in sharing the gospel. The Place grew very rapidly and was reaching many who had abandoned church and now found themselves connecting with the community of believers. Conflict arose over the style of music they would play, and the way they would perceive certain activities on the Sabbath.

Within a couple of years, The Place moved from the Thousand Oaks Church property and found a place to rent from a Sunday church. The transition split the Thousand Oaks Church, because the young people wanted to continue worshiping and the parents of those young people

wanted to be supportive of their spiritual growth. The Thousand Oaks Church continued to become more and more conservative in comparison to The Place, and pigeon toe itself into rigidity as it related to what would be considered conservative vs liberal. I was told when I started pastoring at Thousand Oaks, “We are the conservative church of Conejo Valley.” This statement was meant to say that, “We don’t do liberal things like The Place.”

On July 1, 2016, I was brought into the church pastorate with the emphasis on youth and young adult ministry, worship music, and specialized evangelism. On the first day I was to start, the youth were being led by a couple who were teaching in a room that could only manage about eight youth before they would need a larger room. I was surprised by the way the space was being used. They had large young children’s rooms, but the youth room was divided between the Junior High group and the youth. The Junior High group had 2/3 of the room, the youth had 1/3 of the room. I asked the head elder to put himself in the mind of the parents who were bringing their children to church. I asked him, “How does the way we use space here at the church cause the parents to think of the value that we have for their child?” The answer given was that we love children, but we don’t have enough space for youth. This mindset would play out in the way youth and young adults were included in the worship programming as well.

I placed the responsibility of the high-school-age youth under our intern, and I managed the young adult age group. I asked the group what would be a space at church that would be meaningful for them to experience God together? They said that they wanted a cafe setting that would be out in nature and would offer opportunities to discuss spiritual subjects related to scripture while sipping on a cup of coffee. I assured them that their hopes for that environment was possible, and we could make it happen. We set out with a building project to expand a deck underneath the large oak tree near the church. Young and old worked side by side to accomplish

the space hoped for by this new young adult group. When the project was completed, we implemented our cafe setting and started to send out invites. The group grew rapidly, and we started to include them in the worship experience.

Conflict started to develop over the issues of coffee being served at church and the kind of music the young people would play for worship. The Seventh day Adventist Church recommends healthful nutrition as part of their advice for spiritual wellness, and coffee is not recommended. But culturally the young adults are divided on whether coffee fits into the definition of bad or good health. I felt that I needed to defend the space for the young adults to have their identity that they developed, and so we tried to compromise and have several options, including juice, tea, and water to accommodate those who were more critical of the coffee being served. The group who was against the young adults serving coffee were a small group but were very loud and influential at the time. The more I defended the need to be open, the more rigid the small group would become against the new young adult group. Even my own children went through spiritual wrestling as they saw what the pharisaical members were willing to do to get their own way.

I asked the young adults to participate with me in leading the worship music for the church. I would ask the participants what song spoke to them the most and brought them closer to Christ. They would share and I would try to implement the song into the musical selections from week to week. Soon the music became an issue of conflict. I had a young man who was playing the cajon for the praise team and he was criticized for playing, “The devil’s instrument.” He stopped playing music with us and soon stopped attending. I had another small group of people address the songs themselves and say that they weren’t spiritual because they weren’t the hymns. That group wanted only hymns to be played and the young adults were wanting to

include contemporary Christian music that was meaningful to them as well. I was trying to be inclusive so that those who were coming, both those who appreciated our traditional music as well as those who found spiritual value in contemporary, would be able to have a song that ministered to them each week. So, we did a couple of hymns, and we did a couple of contemporary songs to try to minister to both needs. The young adults were supportive, but my older congregants, which included a small group of people complaining about the music, were not.

Some other areas of contention that developed revolved around staging and decorations for the theme of the preaching series. The use of candles became an area of conflict. From the food that was eaten to the music, to the artistic expression, everything fell under criticism as if the young people were bringing worldliness into the sanctity of God's space. Unfortunately, the group slowly disbanded and went from a growing group of fifteen to twenty, down to two to three quickly, due to the conflicts.

The ideology itself was in conflict. The small group of older people who were unwilling to allow for anything that would disrupt their spiritual space caused them to shun the young people and not allow them to have any spiritual space in the church. This situation could have been avoided if only the parents of those young adults were to have stepped in and defended the spirituality of their young people at the Thousand Oaks Church.

These conflicts that the Thousand Oaks Church struggled through are not unique when comparing other churches within our denomination. The Adventist News Network (ANN), in an article written September of 2021, addressed the need for dealing with these and other conflicts:

Many ministries rise to that responsibility, formulating open arenas in which strong characters can be built with gentle guidance. Unfortunately, many understand the idea of fostering young people but fall short in practice. For some, a young person's failure to abide by rigged church standards is seen as a failure of the young person to abide by

God's word. Here is where conflict can arise. When law and tradition are seen as equal, or greater than, God's gospel, then a young person's desire to invite new methods or practices can be confused with an attack on the gospel itself. What would we say to a 17-year-old Ellen G. White, a forerunner of the Adventist Movement, if she entered our church today? Would we listen to her radical exposure of the Bible, or reject her as a young girl, immature in the faith and a blasphemer of tradition? We don't know the power of our youth if we do not listen and act, potentially stunting ministry.⁴²

Marcus Torres, director of the podcast, "The Story Church Project," speaks to the issue of conflicts that happen as a result of generational culture wars in worship in one of his series called, "Deconstructing the Adventist Worship Wars." Episode 11 of this podcast series deals with, "Nostalgia, Tradition and the Endless Struggle Between 'Old Vs New.'" In the podcast, Pastor Marcus is speaking to Maxwell Kozen Aka who is looking at the subject of older culture verses younger culture throughout history and the fact that this worship war that we experience is nothing new. Max quotes the scripture Ecclesiastes 7:10: "Say not, 'Why were the former days better than these?' For it is not from wisdom that you ask this."(ESV)

These cultural issues of difference date back to biblical times and are nothing new. They are not coming from a place of wisdom. The conversation that they continue shares the historical context for many of the generational culture worship wars over the way we pray, the musical instruments that are used in worship, and the way we dress for worship. These conflicts have all come from a cultural conflict that, as Adventists, we inherited and, over the passage of time, defined as traditional or conservative.⁴³

⁴² Nicole Dominguez, "A Generation to Serve," Adventist News Network, General Conference, September 5, 2021, <https://adventist.news/news/a-generation-to-serve>.

⁴³ Marcus Torres, "EP 11 - Nostalgia, Tradition and the Endless Struggle between 'Old vs New,'" SoundCloud, accessed November 30, 2022. https://soundcloud.com/pomopastor/deconstructing-the-adventist-worship-wars-feat-maxwell-aka-part-11?ref=clipboard&p=a&c=1&si=af50f0ff16364c05976eb868d0108a2b&utm_source=mobi&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=social_sharing.

This generational cultural conflict plays out in how Adventists relate to the difference between prayer and music. “In Adventism,” writes Torres, “when it comes to prayer, the language of the heart is meaningful, but when it comes to music, the language of the heart doesn’t matter. What matters is correct form.”⁴⁴

Historically speaking, the way Christianity managed prayer, was to have written prayers. To pray from the heart was seen as chaotic and very informal. Adventists embraced the open, unrehearsed prayer as being more spiritual, but when it comes to music, chose to define hymns as more spiritual because of its formalized structure. The manner in which the Adventists approach these two spiritual disciplines is very inconsistent and defies logical explanation. And, these two areas of spiritual struggle have profoundly been at the heart of the struggle that has been happening at the Thousand Oaks Church. Ironically, the older generation who have tried to hang onto the past as a nostalgic expression of worship have profoundly caused the youth at the church to reject the very thing that the older generation has tried to convey as valuable.

In a reflection of societal assessment, Max quotes Douglas Adams in saying, “Number 1. Anything that is in the world when you are born is normal and ordinary and an actual part of the way the world works. Number 2. Anything that is invented between the ages of 15 and 35 is new and exciting and revolutionary and you can probably get a career in it. Number 3. Anything invented after you’re 35 is against the order of things.”⁴⁵ Much of the basis of the battles arising from these generational worship wars come from familiarity with the things that make us

⁴⁴ Torres, “Episode 11,” SoundCloud.

⁴⁵ Torres, “Episode 11,” SoundCloud.

comfortable. Our older generation feel just as vulnerable in their continual spiritual development as the youth in their beginning spiritual development.

When we had first started focusing on the youth at the Thousand Oaks church, all three of the pastoral staff called a meeting for the whole church to discuss the need to focus on the spiritual care of the youth. It was after a potluck and the pastors shared the needs and how we had planned on implementing ministries to meet the spiritual needs of the youth and young adults. The room was filled with over 100 people and, as we were sharing our new plans, a hand was raised and interrupted our sharing. The person asked the question, “But what about the older people? What are you going to do for the older people in the church?” Stunned, we struggled to get back to our original subject, but were distracted again with the idea from those in attendance that if we were to do something for the youth, that we needed to do something for the older generation as well. At the time, the older generation couldn’t get their mind around the idea that all that we do at the church, primarily, is already focused on the older generation.

On another occasion, I was speaking to the previous head elder, and trying to convey that our role as elders is to develop the young people spiritually and, as we do, value new joy and personal spiritual satisfaction as we see the spiritual light bulb turn on in the lives of younger generation. For a short moment, he understood and agreed. He made a passionate plea to the church on our Wednesday night prayer meeting to be accepting of the young people and care for them, “even if they dress different or have blue hair. It is our job to nurture them into a relationship with God.” That passion was short-lived because the other older members of the church were unreceptive to the value of connecting to the spiritual needs of the youth.

Interestingly, as Covid shut down American churches, the Thousand Oaks church tried to figure out a way to continue to remain connected as a church family. Those who were older and

greater of risk to the outbreak of Covid stayed away from gathering even though the restrictions of gathering were maintained when we developed the worship outside on the patio. We developed a hybrid Zoom and live worship program utilizing people live as well as those joining by Zoom to fulfill the different aspects of the worship service. The Thousand Oaks church would host live worship music, and someone on Zoom would participate in the congregational prayer. Or the scripture reading would be shared from someone on Zoom. The sermon was sometimes live and sometimes shared through Zoom. As we accommodated the governmental restrictions over gathering, those who were at the heart of the conflict stopped their divisive behavior and the leadership of the church transitioned to a different group of people more willing to be inclusive. This has changed the trajectory of the church to be a place that would allow for the youth to be nurtured through mentorship. We are now again ready to build a church family that is open to cross generational mentorship. I take one caveat away from this whole experience: This generational conflict over spiritual expression could have been averted if the parents of those young adults would have stepped in and defended the spirituality of their young people.

Chapter 5.

Project Description, Implementation, and Results

Grandchildren are the crown of the aged,

and the glory of children is their fathers. Proverbs 17:6

I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth. 3 John 1:4

Jesus said, “Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. “Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me...”

Matthew 18:3-5

The project that I developed at the Thousand Oaks Seventh day Adventist Church was intended to connect generations together through mentorship with the anticipation that the mentorship would have a cross-generational impact on both the mentor as well as the mentee. Through this cross generational mentorship process, there would be a Newton’s Cradle effect spiritually upon all participants. The younger generation would grow in their ability to have a safe place to express their values, questions, and concerns about spiritual practices, while being directed in how to incorporate spirituality in their daily lives and worship experience at church. The older generation would be able to express their values, questions and concerns while engaging with their young people, causing these mentors to grow in spiritual disciplines by viewing them through the eyes of their youth. Through this process of cross generational mentorship, we expected the generation gap in worship and spiritual disciplines to be less abrasive to each other than had been in the recent past experiences in the Thousand Oaks church.

The method of the project was to invite our youth to participate with their parents in an eight week program. The program would consist of each week having a Bible study discussion on a spiritual discipline, allowing time for each of the participants to respond to discussion questions relating to the topic. The subjects for study were church, prayer, Bible study, fellowship, giving, testimony, meditation on Christ, and worship music. These subjects were derived from the Seventh day Adventist fundamental belief, "Continue to Grow." Following the discussions that the parents and the youth had with each another, I asked each one to respond to me by email privately, to decrease the variable of attempting to be viewed positively by the other participant. The questions that the participants responded to me were reflection questions about what they learned from each other about the spiritual discipline they worked through. I paid special attention to three responses structured within the reflection questions: 1. Value = valuing the other person's experience and make it part of their own. 2. Open = making sure that the other person is enabled to experience the expression of that spiritual discipline in a worship setting. 3. Defense = defending the other person's spiritual need from those who might be non-receptive and critical of that spiritual need. These focus points, Value, Open, Defense were graded in the response questions on a scale from one through ten, with ten being highly supportive.

The Thousand Oaks Seventh day Adventist Church had experienced very difficult generational cultural struggles over spiritual expression, which had a profound impact on the participants who were available to work through the project. In total, there were six families

who participated in the eight-week program. The youth that participated are the remaining youth group members in the church. In total there were eighteen participants in the project counting two parents per youth. I received from each youth a response to each of the spiritual disciplines the family worked through, but I received only one parent response to represent both parents. Our total weekly attendance at the church is roughly sixty-five to seventy. The percentage of participants in the project compared to the whole of the average attendance is roughly 28% of the church body at the time of the project. I received thirty-seven responses from the parents, and thirty-three responses from the youth. This represents a 73% response ratio to the total possible for each of the eight spiritual subjects discussed between the parents and the youth.

Results of the Study

I used three different aspects for tabulating:

1. Value = valuing the other person's experience and make it part of their own. This is number one in each of the calculations
2. Open = making sure that the other person is enabled to experience it. This is number two in each of the calculations.
3. Defense = defending the other person's spiritual need. This is number three in each of the calculations.

Parents:

Spiritual Discipline:

1.	10	10	10	7	10	10	10	10	10	10	9	10
	10											
2.	10	10	10	8.5	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
	10											
3.	10	10	10	1	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
	10											

1. Mean=9.7
Median=10

2. Mean=9.9
Median=10

3. Mean=9.3
Median=10

Please note that represented herein is a parent who values self at a ten, but comments that he/she wishes the youth would do things differently

Youths:

Spiritual Discipline:

1.	3	9	6	6	9	5	8	8	6	5	9
2.	8	10	10	9	8	8	10	9	10	8	10
3.	6	1	7	8	9	6	8	9	7	8	9

1. Mean=6.7
Median=6

2. Mean=9.1
Median=9

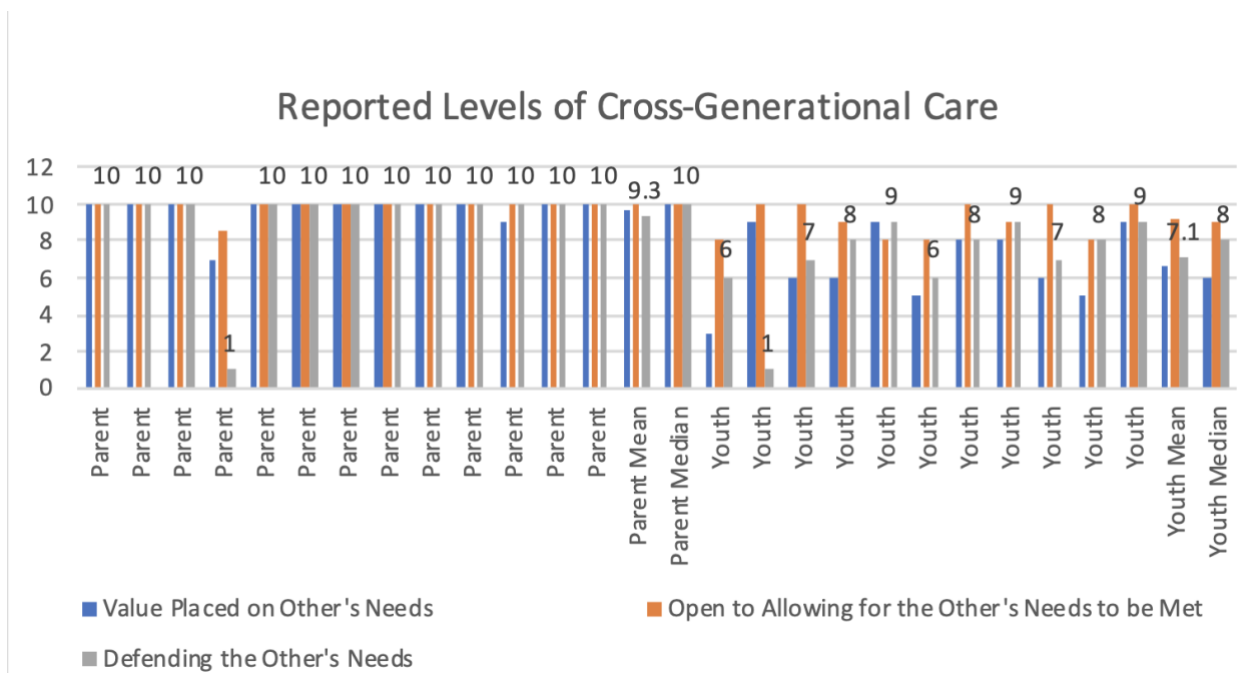
3. Mean=7.1
Median=8

Overall:

1. Mean=8.3
Median=10

2. Mean=9.5
Median=10

3. Mean=8.3
Median=10



For the youth, the mean for defending was the middle, not the lowest number. The lowest number was in valuing the parent's viewpoints. In other words, the youth will defend their parents' views, even if they do not value their parent's views.

Note that people did not seem to understand how Fellowship is a spiritual discipline and did not seem to understand how Fellowship is worship.

Note that these are self-defining numbers. That is, the numbers are self-reported by the participants, rendering them completely subjective in nature, rather than objective based. There may be an objective test that would yield different numbers.

Ratios:

Youth compared to parents:

Youth are 69% as likely to value parents' viewpoints on spiritual disciplines as parents are to value youth viewpoints. Youth are 92% as likely to be open to parents' viewpoints on spiritual disciplines as parents are to be open youth viewpoints. Youth are 76% as likely to defend parent's viewpoints on spiritual disciplines as parents are to defend youth viewpoints.

Value compared to open:

Parents are 2% more likely to be open to youth's viewpoints on spiritual disciplines as parents are to value youth's viewpoints. Youths are 26% more likely to be open to parents' viewpoints on spiritual disciplines as youth are to value parent's viewpoints. People are 13% more likely to be open to the other person's viewpoints on spiritual disciplines as they are to value the other person's viewpoints.

Value compared to defense:

Parents are 4% more likely to value youth's viewpoints on spiritual disciplines than parents are willing to defend youth's viewpoints. Youth are 5% more likely to value parent's viewpoints on spiritual disciplines than youth are willing to defend parent's viewpoints. People are as likely to value the other person's viewpoints as they are to defend the other person's viewpoints.

Open compared to defense:

Parents are 6% more likely to be open to youth's viewpoints on spiritual disciplines than parents are willing to defend youth's viewpoints. Youth are 22% more likely to be open to parent's viewpoints on spiritual disciplines than youth are willing to defend parents' viewpoints. People are 13% more likely to be open to the other person's viewpoints than to defend the other

person's viewpoints. Everyone is willing to be open to the other views, they are less likely to value the other views, and they are much less likely to defend.

The responses raise two main questions for further inquiry. First, how open is a person really if they are not willing to defend the perspective about which they claim to be open? Would the results vary if we defined the risk against which the participants were being asked to defend?

Overall, the project brought parents closer to the spiritual needs of their youth. The parents all seemed to respond very positively to their young person's spiritual needs as it related to the subjects through which they worked. But when it came to the ability to embrace the spiritual expression of their young person, they were slightly less likely to make it part of their own worship practice and even less likely to defend the needs of their youth against critical people in the church community.

Some of the responses from the youth caused me to be a bit surprised. For example, about worship music, the response states, "My parent's spiritual views are pretty traditional with the music for example. They like more traditional songs to be played in the church not contemporary Christian songs to be played in church." When asked how they would include their parents' value about the subject in their own personal worship experience, this young person responded, "I'm not sure that I would." When asked, on a scale of one to ten, how open they are to valuing their parents' worship experience as their own in this subject, the same young person responded, "I think I would rate it a 7-8 maybe even a 9 because I can see myself doing what my parents do for worship but not everything that they do for worship like the songs." This person continues to share that, "I think that [my parents] need to change their views from the traditional songs to more contemporary Christian songs." For this young person, it seems that

they are wanting deeply for worship music at church to be more contemporary for them to receive a spiritual blessing in the worship music. I can only assume that the conversation with the parents on this subject caused this young person to feel very strongly that they are not being ministered in the subject of worship music at church.

When the young person's views are compared with the views of their parents in the subject of worship music at church, the parents responded that they would be open to the young person's need for contemporary music. They responded they would be open to allowing their young person to experience what they need spiritually in worship music at church worship as an eight to nine. This would indicate that the parents are very open to accommodating their young person's need at church, but the message of that willingness is not coming through to the youth for some reason. Furthermore, when it comes to the subject of defending their youths need for contemporary music at church, the parents diverted from the question and responded, "I don't think it is about defending but seeing through the eyes of Jesus. The church is starving of a praying congregation and if that is done more, then God will reveal more." I interpret this to say that rather than standing up for your young person's need to be spiritually uplifted in contemporary Christian music, the parent would divert and pray about it without defense. On this subject of worship music in the church, I wonder if the relationship were closer whether the support for the youth would be more readily experienced.

On the other hand, another young person's response to the subject of worship music in the church recognized that his "dad finds the songs most meaningful to him when the song is very similar to the message of the sermon, and that he appreciates songs like Amazing Grace because it emphasizes that we aren't perfect but God loves us anyway." This same youth said, regarding defending his parents' views on music that he, "can let them [those critical] know that

music can be inspiring to many people and if they don't like it, they can come to church after the music section." This young person is bold enough to defend their parents' need of a message of grace.

I believe that the message of the song could very well be the connection between the parents and the child. Many hymns and contemporary Christian songs both center their message on grace. This young person's parent responded to what they learned from their youth that, "Enjoys music but just not the hymns that are somewhat monotone." This parent - child mentor-mentee discovered some commonality in how they both relate to music in the church. Neither prioritize music highly but appreciate those who do. The parent also indicated on the scale of one to ten, they responded with a ten, meaning they are very likely to defend their young person's spiritual needs in music. The parent says they would, "Let them know we all have our own gifts, and some people are not into singing as others are."

In response to the whole of the project, one parent came to the conclusion the need to, "Take into account and do things that are more meaningful to her, even if they aren't as meaningful to me... allow each other to experience worship in their own way and to let her know her opinions are valued by me and God and that not everyone experiences God that way and not to worry about other's opinions, just God's opinions" This parent responded to each of the one-to-ten items that they support in all three at a ten meaning that they are very likely to be open to, to value, and to defend all of the spiritual subjects their young person's needs.

The participants demonstrated a 13% greater likelihood to be open to the other person's viewpoints than to defend the other person's viewpoints. Everyone is willing to be open to the other views, they are less likely to value the other views, and they are much less likely to defend.

One of the questions that resulted from this project is, how open can one claim to be to another person's viewpoint on spiritual disciplines, when one is unlikely to defend the other person's viewpoint to those who are critical? It seems from the way the parents and the youth avoid the subject of defense on behalf of the other indicates that there is something about defending someone else's spiritual needs causes a certain level of apprehension. But this area of defending the spiritual needs of one another is the environment necessary for tolerance to be the fertile ground upon which spiritual maturity grows.

Both the parents and the child need to have the opportunity to continue to grow in Christ. Otherwise, stagnation of faith starts to set in. Many have seen water that has stagnated. The results of stagnated water are discoloration, and bacterial growth that can be very harmful if consumed. Likewise, spirituality that stagnates, discolors the gospel of Christ, and allows for negativity to grow in ways that effects the entire community.

This project demonstrated to me that parents and children who come together spiritually, can break down the barriers for spiritual development found within a typical community of Adventist believers. Those barriers that often exist in a traditional church community reject the ability of young people to be contributors to the spiritual experience, bringing new methods of spiritual practices that can enhance the overall spiritual experience of the community. The project demonstrated the openness and value of the parents for the young people's spiritual growth and in a slightly smaller scale, the parents' willingness to defend the spiritual needs of their young person from those who might be critical and reject new expressions of spiritual growth.

The difficulties I had encouraging the consistency of the parents and the youth to complete the project in a timely manner spoke to the fact that spirituality between parents and

youth at home is not happening consistently. As the research has demonstrated, the spiritual growth that can happen because of coming together to share in spiritual disciplines, can only happen as families are willing to prioritize spiritual growth in their home. Sadly, I'm afraid that there are competing time constraints that rob the ability to have consistency in spiritual disciplines at home. This competing time is consumed with work, school, sports, social activities, and homework, as well as special events that happen in the family that make it difficult to meet together spiritually with any regularity if not planned out and protected as a family priority. My suspicion is that the parents would be supportive of the spiritual development of their children but are unaware of their need, due to lack of time to discover what thoughts their children have on these and other spiritual disciplines.

If Ellen White's statement about family governance being of the utmost importance in response to Spalding's priority, than the families represented in this study need to discover what Spalding suggested: "We may preach year in and year out, we may bring men, women, and children 'into the truth,'" we may continue to educate in secular and religious matters in church school and training school, but unless we look into the home life we shall fail to find the secret of that instability. This is the lack of perseverance and energy which has been the bane of our Southern converts. Unless we reach the home life and train right there in Christian principle and living, we shall fail to find the most comprehensive remedy."⁴⁶

The majority of the conflict that has happened at the Thousand Oaks Seventh day Adventist Church was in regard to generational differences. Having come to the other side of that conflict, I now see that the congregation is much more open to seeing the contributions of young people in the areas of spiritual disciplines. The church is now open to young people

⁴⁶ Casillas and Voorheis, "Spalding, Arthur Whitefield."

bringing their expression of worship and participation. The young people are participating in the reading of the scripture, singing the worship music, running the audio-visual department, and even preaching the sermon. They are being embraced and appreciated for their participation in the community of faith in ways that, since I started pastoring the church, I have not seen. I would say, the church is becoming much more like a family than ever before, as a result of having gone through the project. If Spalding is correct that family governance is the science of God's love, then maybe a by-product of having done this project at the Thousand Oaks Seventh day Adventist Church is that we as a church are discovering that science and are becoming a more loving church.

Chapter 6.

Final recommendations

And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ. It is right for me to feel this way about you all, because I hold you in my heart, for you are all partakers with me of grace... Philipians 1:6-7a.

Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect, but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. Let those of us who are mature think this way... Philipians 3:12-15a

After completing the project with the families at the Thousand Oaks Seventh day Adventist Church, I would recommend that there be further study and training in how to incorporate spirituality in the home as a regular priority. The Seventh day Adventist Church prioritized family spirituality in the home early in the development of the church. This is emphasized through the writings of Ellen White in the books, *Adventist Home* and *Child Guidance*. The church was to be an extension of the home family spiritual basis. In *Adventist Home*, Ellen White writes, “Home Is the Heart of All Activity—Society is composed of family and is what the heads of families make it. Out of the heart are ‘the issues of life’; and the heart of the community, of the church, and of the nation is the household. The well-being of society, the success of the church, the prosperity of the nation, depend upon home influences.”⁴⁷

⁴⁷ White, “The Adventist Home.”

Creating space for the spiritual development of children must be a priority for modern families. Home is the very heart of all things that function in society. And without the space created for families to come together and grow in spiritual practices, the young people will flounder for lack of a moral compass. This will have dramatic impact on the church as well. I perceive that the generational differences will continue to become more and more rigid. This will result in an increasingly lessened ability for the spiritual needs of the young people to be met. This will, ultimately, leave the young people who do value spiritual disciplines with an undesirable choice. They can either conform to what is already in place, or as “The Place” Seventh day Adventist Church did, go somewhere else.

The ability to break free from this conundrum starts with home worship. “The home that is beautified by love, sympathy, and tenderness is a place that angels love to visit, and where God is glorified. The influence of a carefully guarded Christian home in the years of childhood and youth is the surest safeguard against the corruptions of the world. In the atmosphere of such a home the children will learn to love both their earthly parents and their heavenly Father.”⁴⁸

As the world journeyed through Covid and the churches shut down, I would suggest part of the difficulties young people faced was loneliness. This was in part because the home has not been in the practice of providing the spiritual nurture necessary to give stability during difficult times. The three years that incorporated Covid has been a wake-up call for parents to create space for the family to have spiritual development in the home.

⁴⁸ White, “The Adventist Home.”

Springtide Research Institute conducted a survey in 2020 titled, “The State of Religion & Young People Relational Authority,” in which it was discovered that, “27% of young people have one or fewer adults in their life that they can turn to if they need to talk.” In addition to this, “69% have 3 or fewer meaningful interactions in a regular day.” The survey indicated that 74% believe their parents are the ones young people could turn to if needed. This indicates that the young people who were surveyed recognize that their parents are the ones that they feel are most available if needed. However, on the issue of, “Mitigating Loneliness and Isolation,” 58% of the respondents reported an inability find someone with whom to speak.⁴⁹ Some of the loneliness that was experienced by our youth during the times of Covid could have been mitigated if parents had provided those times for the young people to connect and express themselves.

The struggle that I had trying to encourage families to spend half an hour each week for a spiritual discussion with their own children indicates that more work needs to be done in the spiritual home life. Adventists who once prioritized a spiritual home and family worship have deferred that responsibility to the religious organizational structures, such as school or church. One family that I was trying to encourage to participate chose not to because they could not find the time to do it. This same mother is one of the supporters of the children’s ministry at the church. She has told me that she is desperate for her daughter to have a youth group to meet her needs but does not bring her daughter with her to church. I spoke to the daughter and asked her

⁴⁹ Josh Pachard et al., *The State of Religion & Young People 2020: Relational Authority* (Bloomington, MN: Springtide Research Institute, 2020), 40-43.

if she would be willing to participate and she answered affirmatively. The mother, however, did not prioritize it and told me they did not have time.

This story is too often the case. Families who have teenagers claim to desperately want their children to have a spiritual connection. However, they put the blame on the church for not providing spiritual nurture and care. The families ignore the fact that they are supposed to be providing that spiritual nurture and care at home.

I believe the church would do well to emphasize the need for spiritual care at home and to provide the families with the tools to make it possible for family home worship to be prioritized. This time for family home spiritual development and care would have to include openness to listening to one another. The home spiritual development and care is dependent upon parents truly listening to their children about the spiritual questions as well as providing a space for the child to share how God is speaking to them. When I was interviewing Dottie Versteeg, daughter of John Hancock about her father's role in mentorship and the Adventist Church, she mentioned, "When you are heard, You are loved!!!" Parents need to hear their young people and when they truly listen to the spiritual needs expressed, they will convey their love for their child. Parents represent the listening ear of the Heavenly Father.

Another recommendation for the church is that parents become the support system for the spiritual expression of their child within the church community. The young people need to feel safe to express themselves. When they have the support of their parents, they don't suffer from the criticisms that too often spiritually impact and stunt their spiritual growth. With the parents

support at church, the church would be more invested in the lives of the young people. This would result in an increase in the young people's participation within the church service and the church structure. This would give birth to more cross-generational relationships. Those relationships would help bring the church to have the identity of acceptance and willingness to meet the spiritual needs of people who are starting their walk with Christ.

“The most prominent competency areas are discipleship with the inclusion of new convert mentoring, and personal connectedness. Another area of absolute importance has to do with the churches willingness to change where, when, and how it should be relevant to the youth.”

Another component has to do with creating personal support relationships to link new believers with seasoned believers in mentoring relationships. The Scriptures advocate for the two-by-two principle that New Testament leaders employed. Many times, as is evident in Paul's letters, younger less experience believers were placed with more senior and experienced believers. This is referred to as the peer or mentoring paradigm. Since the success of needed competencies depends largely on the skills and expertise of church leaders, the church is compelled to train or acquire trained facilitators from elsewhere.⁵⁰

These relationships that would happen as a natural byproduct of participation in church programing would allow for the young people to interact with more adults allowing them to have a collage of people to provide spiritual guidance. In other words, participation in cross-generational communication results in a cycle in which people are increasingly open to participating in cross-generational communication.

⁵⁰ Conrad St. George Duncan, “A Membership Retention Strategy for the Maranatha Seventh day Adventist Church” (DMin Thesis, Andrews University 2015), 49, <https://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1392&context=dmin>.

Starting a mentorship training program at the church would be secondary to an initiative for home worship but would allow the spiritual disciplines to be processed by a greater number of people within the community of faith. I would like to encourage all leaders in the local church to invest in a young person as part of their leadership responsibility. This would mean that the elders of the church would choose someone in whom to invest time and energy. The same would be true of the deacons, greeters, and sabbath school leaders. All participants within the church would have the responsibility to mentor someone younger. If, by chance, the church does not yet have enough young people to pour into, the leadership would be responsible to find someone, a grandchild, neighbor, or someone at the school to mentor. This mentorship program would revolutionize the openness, value, and defense of young people exploring their spirituality and expression, and would force the older generation to broaden the confines of their spirituality and bring them into the next generations reception to God. The doctrine of, “Growing In Christ,” is part of our belief system. As older people mentor younger, they will continue to grow in Christ in ways that will transcend the nostalgia of their own spiritual past.

New research came out of a study done by Fuller Theological Seminary, “Growing Young,” would provide the directives to process a traditional church to become one that is open to allowing young people to find their place in the community of faith. The secondary research that followed up the Growing Young, is the, “Growing With,” initiative that most recently has been encouraged by youth and young adult leadership within the denomination. These resources

would provide the structure to develop a mentorship program at the Thousand Oaks Seventh day Adventist Church.

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Appendix A

4-1-2021

Passing Spirituality Cross Generationally Through Mentorship

Jonathan Clark

805-405-8446

Jonathan.clark@cst.edu

Dmin-Hybrid

Project Period – 9/2021-12/2021

There is no expected proposed funding for this project. The project will be promoted as a volunteer ministry for the church. I do not see any potential conflicts of interest.

Summary of Research Objective

I am requesting consent to research how to pass spirituality from one generation to the next, with the intent to effect appreciation for each generations approach to spiritual practices. This will be known as cross generational appreciation of spiritual practices. The lack of passing spirituality from one generation to the next has created in the Seventh day Adventist Church an inability to have effective cross generational appreciation and subsequently has separated, to a large extent, the next generation's ability to be prepared for spiritual leadership in many of the existing SDA churches in North America. In the average Seventh day Adventist church, there is a lack of ability for our youth to grow into spiritually mature Christians in which the youth have a safe

place of communicating and implementing those areas of spiritual growth in the local church. Therefore, there is a vacuum of participation from the age group between 16-35 in many of the Seventh day Adventist churches. I plan to develop a team of youth leadership consisting of parents and others who will come together with specific directives in order to share their appreciation for certain spiritual practices to the next generation so that the youth will be able to not only learn from this group, but also convey their own spiritual growth in a safe environment through mentorship. They will go through an 8week Spiritual Practice Connection Tool intended to help each party express their value for Prayer, Music Appreciation, Giving Habits, Church Attendance, Bible Study, Contemplation, Fellowship, and Testimony, with the opportunity to listen and express appreciation for the others spiritual practice. All the while gaining insight and appreciation for cross-generational appreciation. This study will pay special attention to 5 areas of relational interest that The Springtide Research Institute has done in “The State of Religion & Young People, Relational Authority, outlines a framework for connecting an older generation with a younger generation. The model suggests these practices to be used in the building of cross generational relationships; “1. Listening, 2. Transparency, 3. Integrity, 4. Care, 5. Expertise.” This 8week Spiritual Practice Connection Tool will also give the youth the ability to express their personal appreciation for spiritual practices in the subject context and allow for them to share why those directives are meaningful to them.

Procedures for Collecting Data

After each of the cross generational sessions, a survey will be taken to measure appreciation for the spiritual practices they had discussed, taking special note to allow each generation to have honest responses. After each mentorship discussion, there will be a follow up survey to ask how each participant relates to the other generations spiritual practice, and using a scale designed to measure appreciation, I intend to determine whether mentorship between a mature Christian and a youth has an impact on the appreciation for these 8 spiritual practices from each generation.

For example, styles of music is an area of disagreement between older and younger generations. The Older generation typically find value and appreciation of traditional songs while the younger generation typically find value in contemporary worship songs. I believe that through the process of cross generational mentorship, there will be an appreciation gain for opposite generational spiritual practices because of the relationship and trust that is built from mentorship.

To measure the appreciation for opposite generational spiritual practices, a scale 1-10 measure will initially be used to measure how each generation relates to the 8 spiritual practices in the Seventh day Adventist Church. Following the collection of the initial survey, we will match up mature Christians in the church with youth in the church and they will go through a set of studies that encourage conversation about these eight spiritual practices; Prayer, Music Appreciation, Giving Habits, Church Attendance, Bible Study, Contemplation, Fellowship, and

Testimony. After each of the cross-mentorship session, the participants will respond to a survey that will measure their appreciation for the spiritual practices of the opposite generation. By cross examining the initial survey and the surveys following each cross generational mentorship session, we will be able to measure appreciation levels for these spiritual practices. The exiting survey and interview will be the final measure of appreciation for the spiritual practices.

The populations to be recruited will be 1. Mature Christians who have developed their sense of identity in Christ and have developed a standard for themselves in spiritual practices.

Who have successfully passed a background check to work with youth and complete the Spiritual Growth Assessment found in Appendix A.

2. Youth who are growing in their sense of identity in Christ but have started to develop a value for spiritual practices that are personally meaningful. I will be inviting volunteers from The Thousand Oaks Seventh day Adventist Church as well as the Ventura Seventh day Adventist Church to participate. I will be using Claremont School of Theology's recommended consent letters for both participants able to give legal consent, as well as for persons not able to give legal consent. See Appendix B.

I am the senior pastor for both The Ventura Seventh day Adventist and the Thousand Oaks Seventh day Adventist congregations. I will be recruiting from the two churches I am in charge of. The process I will use to contact the participants will be asking for recommendations from the church board, pastoral requesting of parents of current attending youth, and youth leader volunteers. I will contact all participants in the program directly through church membership contact lists.

Privacy and Dignity of Participants

The privacy and dignity of all the participants is important and the data collected will be scanned and stored in the lead researcher's computer which is fingerprint secured. Only the lead researcher has access to the materials. All hard copies of surveys and responses will be shredded after it is scanned. The data collected digitally will be deleted upon completion of the project with expected completion date to be 05/2022. There will not be any personal data or identifiable facts used in the dissemination of the collected data. No names will be used or identifiable facts in the completed project.

Appendix B

Participants Able to Give Legal Consent

Consent to Participate in Research

Identification of Investigator and Purpose of Study

You are invited to participate in a research study, entitled “Passing Spirituality Cross Generationally through Mentorship” by Pastor Jonathan Clark under the supervision of Dr. Karen Dalton of Claremont School of Theology, 1325 N. College Ave; Claremont, CA 91711, kdalton@cst.edu

The purpose of this research study is to examine how cross generational mentorship effects the appreciation of spiritual practices between the generations. Your participation in the study will contribute to a better understanding of how developing mentorship relationship effect the acceptability of spiritual practices previously unappreciated. You are free to contact the investigator using the information below to discuss the study.

Jonathan Clark, 805-405-8446, Jonathan.clark@cst.edu.

You must be at least 18 years old to participate.

If you agree to participate:

- The cross generational mentorship sessions will consist of approximately 1 to 1 ½ hours a week for 8 weeks.
- Your participation is intended to share your appreciation for spiritual practices while listening to a young person share their appreciation to gain insight and cross generational appreciation for those practices that differ.
- Your participation will consist in meeting with a young person once a week and participate with them in a prepared discussion about Prayer, Music Appreciation, Giving Habits, Church Attendance, Bible Study, Contemplation, Fellowship, and Testimony. After having the cross generational mentorship session, you will participate in a survey relating to the subject of the week.
- You will not be compensated.

The purpose of this study is to gain insight into practical theology, pastoral care and/or spiritual care. Participation in this study should not be regarded as—or substituted for—therapy by a licensed professional.

Risks and Confidentiality of Data

There are no known risks. There will be no costs for participating. Your name, email address and other personally identifiable information will be kept during the data collection phase and then deleted and or destroyed. No personally identifiable information will be publicly

released. Your personal information, if collected, will be used solely for tracking purposes. Pastor Jonathan Clark will have access to the data during data collection.

When the results of the research are published or discussed in conferences, no information will be included that would reveal your identity. If photographs, videos, or audio-tape recordings of your participation are used for educational purposes, your identity will be protected or disguised. Your information will be stored until the completion of the research and then destroyed.

Participation or Withdrawal

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may decline to answer any question and you have the right to withdraw from participation at any time. Withdrawal will not affect your relationship with Claremont School of Theology in any way. If you do not want to participate, you may simply stop participating.

Contacts

If you have any questions about the study or need to update your email address contact the primary investigator Jonathan Clark at **805-405-8446** or send an email to jonathan.clark@cst.edu or contact the advisor Karen Dalton at 909-455-8453 or email to kdalton@cst.edu. This study has been reviewed by Claremont School of Theology Institutional Review Board and the study number is 2021-0503.

Questions about your rights as a research participant.

If you have questions about your rights or are dissatisfied at any time with any part of this study, you can contact, anonymously if you wish, the chair of the Institutional Review Board by email at irb@cst.edu.

Thank you.

SIGNATURE OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANT

I have read the information provided above. I have been given an opportunity to ask questions and all of my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I have been given a copy of this form.

Name of Participant

Signature of Participant

Date

Address

Phone

Email

SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR

Signature of Investigator
participant 's)

Date (same as

A copy of this document will be supplied for your records.

Informed Consent
for Persons Not able to Give Legal Consent

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Passing Spirituality Cross Generationally Through Mentorship

Parent Consent Form

We invite your child to participate in a research study conducted at the Claremont School of Theology by Pastor Jonathan Clark, a student in **the** D.Min program at Claremont School of Theology. This researcher may be contacted at any time at 476 Knollwood Dr. Thousand Oaks CA 91320, 805-405-8446, Jonathan.clark@cst.edu.

Dr. Karen Dalton is the CST faculty advisor for this study. **[Your child's]** participation in this study is voluntary. You should read the information below, and ask questions about anything you do not understand before deciding whether or not **[your child]** may participate.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this research study is to examine how cross generational mentorship effects the appreciation of spiritual practices between the generations. Your participation in the study will contribute to a better understanding of how developing mentorship relationship effect the acceptability of spiritual practices previously unappreciated. You are free to contact the investigator using the information below to discuss the study.

Jonathan Clark, 805-405-8446, Jonathan.clark@cst.edu.

The purpose of this study is to gain insight into practical theology, pastoral care and/or spiritual care. Participation in this study should not be regarded as—or substituted for—therapy by a licensed professional.

- **DURATION AND LOCATION**

Participation in this study will consist of approximately 1 to 1 ½ hours a week for 8 weeks meeting with a verified mature Christian adult in a public location agreed upon by participant and parent of the youth.

- **PROCEDURE**

If you allow **[your child]** to participate in this study, we would ask them to participate in sharing their appreciation for spiritual practices while listening to the older person share their appreciation, to gain insight and cross generational appreciation for those practices that differ.

Your participation will consist in meeting with an older Christian adult once a week and participate with them in a prepared discussion about Prayer, Music Appreciation, Giving Habits, Church Attendance, Bible Study, Contemplation, Fellowship, and Testimony. After having the cross generational mentorship session, you will participate in a survey relating to the subject of the week.

You will not be compensated.

- **POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS**

We do not anticipate any risks involved in participating in this study.

If at any time they feel uncomfortable, they are free to rest or to stop participating in the study.

- **ALTERNATIVES TO PARTICIPATION**

You have the right to refuse permission for **[your child]** to participate in this study. You may also choose to withdraw **[your child]** at any time from the study.

- **CONFIDENTIALITY**

When the results of the research are published or discussed in conferences, no information will be included that would reveal **[your child's]** identity. If photographs, videos, or audio-tape recordings of **[your child]** will be used for educational purposes, their identity will be protected or disguised. **[Your child's]** information will be stored the completion of the project and then destroyed.

- **PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL**

Participation in this research is voluntary. If you do not allow your child to participate, that will not affect your relationship with Claremont School of Theology. If you allow **[your child]** participate, you are free to withdraw your consent and discontinue their participation at any time without prejudice.

- **WITHDRAWAL OF PARTICIPATION BY THE INVESTIGATOR**

The investigator may withdraw **[your child]** from participating in this research if investigator believes that withdrawal from the study is in **[the child's]** best interest.

- **CONTACTS**

If you have any questions about the study or need to update your email address contact the primary

investigator Jonathan Clark at **805-405-8446** or send an email to jonathan.clark@cst.edu or

contact the advisor Karen Dalton at **909-455-8453** or email to kdalton@cst.edu. This study has been

reviewed by Claremont School of Theology Institutional Review Board and the study number is

2021-0503.

· **QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR RIGHTS AS A RESEARCH PARTICIPANT**

If you have questions about your rights or are dissatisfied at any time with any part of this study, you can contact, anonymously if you wish, the chair of the Institutional Review Board by email at irb@cst.edu.

v **SIGNATURE OF PARENT OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANT**

I have read the information provided above. I have been given an opportunity to ask questions and all of my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I have been given a copy of this form.

Name of Legal Guardian

Name of Participant

Signature of Legal Guardian

Date

Address

Phone

Email

SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR

Signature of Investigator

Date (same as participant's)

A copy of this document will be supplied for your records.

Claremont School of Theology
Permission to Release or Obtain Personal Information

Participant's Name:
Date of Birth:

I hereby authorize [Name of Researcher] to (check one):
_____ obtain from the following
_____ release to the following

Name:
Address:

the following documents/information/information from the records pertaining to services received

Date of Service:

The documents to be released are described or listed as:

The records are required for the specific purpose of:

I understand that my authorization will remain effective from the date of my signature until, and that the information will be handled confidentially in compliance with all applicable federal laws.

I understand that I may see the information that is to be sent, and that I may revoke the authorization at any time by written, dated communication. I have read and understand the nature of this release.

Signature of Participant/Participant's Designated Representative Date

Witness

Date

Claremont School of Theology
Faculty Endorsement for Student Research

I, Karen Dalton, have reviewed the research proposal "Passing Spirituality Cross-Generationally through Mentorship" of Jonathan Clark and I have agreed to supervise this student research as a part of his or her research toward the following degree.

☐ Ph.D.
☒ D.Min.
☐ M.Div.
☐ M.A.
☐ Other (please specify) _____

I believe that the proposed project is consistent with customary academic research and that the project follows a research protocol that provides adequate protections for the human research participants.

____Karen Dalton_____
Faculty Member



Faculty Signature

____May 11, 2021_____
Date

Lets Go To Church...

Hebrews 10:25

And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near.

Matthew 18:20

For where two or three gather together as my followers, I am there among them."

Questions for Connections

- On a scale between 1-10, where does church fit in on your list of things that you enjoy?
- What do you feel are the benefits of going to church?
- Does church require a building? Why do we go to the building for church? What

difference does the building and the time make to the ability to worship together?

As Seventh day Adventists we go to church to honor the Sabbath. Going to church has come to mean the definition of how we keep the Sabbath as we try to honor God's law and the Sabbath. Scripture tells us in Exodus 31:13 "Tell the people of Israel: 'Be careful to keep my Sabbath day, for the Sabbath is a sign of the covenant between me and you from generation to generation. It is given so you may know that I am the LORD, who makes you holy.'" Therefore, Sabbath is integral to the understanding of church for Adventists.

- Why do you think Sabbath is important?
- How does Sabbath become personal to you?

- How does God make you holy by going to church on Sabbath? Do you feel that there is something that makes you holy through the activity of Going to church?
- How does Church remind us of the covenant that God has made between us?
- What would make you feel closer to God at church?
- What things do we do at church that have no meaning to you?

Challenge for this coming week.

Try to sit together at church and pay attention to how we connect to God in our own ways. Make an effort to see the value of what the Lord is doing (or not doing) in the worship service that reminds you of covenant that Jesus did for each one of us. How does the church service bring each of you into that covenant renewed each week? And after church, ask each other, “What part of the worship service made you feel renewed in your relationship with Jesus?”

Spend some time sharing your prayer requests and offer prayer for one another.

Bible Study - Experiencing the Breath of God

2 Timothy 3:14-17

But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the person of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

Questions for Connections

- What is your favorite verse in the Bible and why?
- How do you experience the breath of God through that verse? What do you think the breath of God means for you personally?
- If you connect the idea of the Scripture being the Breath of God with the moment in creation where God knelt down and breath into man and he became a living soul, Genesis 2:7, it seems that life is the result of the breath of God. How does scripture bring you life? How does it affect your life?
- There are many ways scripture can be seen and heard. Have you ever seen a movie or another book or maybe even a life experience that speaks to you and gives you life in a way that seems to be Breathed from God? How do these experiences relate to scriptures that you have read from the Bible?
- Scripture has a way of giving you the vision of what life is supposed to be like. But sometimes it directs us to making corrections in our lives. How do you deal with aligning your life to reflect what the scripture says?
- What are the good works that you feel you are called to do in line with scripture directives?
- What scriptures would you be willing to share with each other that will be encouraging each other?

Spend some time sharing your prayer requests and offer prayer for one another.

Prayer Perspectives.

The Tent of Meeting

Exodus 33:7-11

Now Moses used to take the tent and pitch it outside the camp, far off from the camp, and he called it the tent of meeting. And everyone who sought the LORD would go out to the tent of meeting, which was outside the camp. Whenever Moses went out to the tent, all the people would rise up, and each would stand at his tent door, and watch Moses until he had gone into the tent. When Moses entered the tent, the pillar of cloud would descend and stand at the entrance of the tent, and the LORD would speak with Moses. And when all the people saw the pillar of cloud standing at the entrance of the tent, all the people would rise up and worship, each at his tent door. Thus the LORD used to speak to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend. When Moses turned again into the camp, his assistant Joshua the son of Nun, a young man, would not depart from the tent.

How do you do alone time with the Lord? It seems that Moses felt that it was vital to his leadership that he would pitch a tent with the intent to meet with God **outside of the camp, and far off from the camp**. I take this to mean that alone time with the Lord is separate from your daily business and needs to be set apart so that you will not be distracted from the routine of life.

Questions for Connections

- What does it take for you to turn off the busy and have quality prayer time?
- I noticed that the scripture says that Joshua, a young man, remained in the tent... what do you think Joshua's prayer life was like? How is your prayer life different from Moses and Joshua's?
- Do you think prayer benefits you? What are the benefits you experience?
- How do you approach prayer? What are the generational differences to prayer?

It seems that when Jesus asked his disciples to pray with Him, sleep was a major distractor to their prayer time.

Luke 9:28-36

Now about eight days after these sayings he took with him Peter and John and James and went up on the mountain to pray. And as he was praying, the appearance of his face was altered, and his clothing became dazzling white. And behold, two men were talking with him, Moses and Elijah, who appeared in glory and spoke of his departure, which he was about to accomplish at

Jerusalem. Now Peter and those who were with him were heavy with sleep, but when they became fully awake they saw his glory and the two men who stood with him. And as the men were parting from him, Peter said to Jesus, “Master, it is good that we are here. Let us make three tents, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah”—not knowing what he said. As he was saying these things, a cloud came and overshadowed them, and they were afraid as they entered the cloud. And a voice came out of the cloud, saying, “This is my Son, my Chosen One; listen to him!” And when the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. And they kept silent and told no one in those days anything of what they had seen.

Matthew 26:36-41

Then Jesus went with them to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to his disciples, “Sit here, while I go over there and pray.” And taking with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, he began to be sorrowful and troubled. Then he said to them, “My soul is very sorrowful, even to death; remain here, and watch with me.” And going a little farther he fell on his face and prayed, saying, “My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will.” And he came to the disciples and found them sleeping. And he said to Peter, “So, could you not watch with me one hour? Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.”

- How do you keep from losing focus in prayer? How do you keep prayer alive and not subject to becoming sleepy?
- What kind of prayer would keep you engaged and focused?

Spend some time sharing your prayer requests and offer prayer for one another.

Contemplation Leading to Transformation

How to realize the way God sees me.

1 John 3:1-3

See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is. And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure.

“Who am I as I realize the manner of love the Father has given to me, that I am called the child of God?”

2 Corinthians 3:18

And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.

“One of the deepest problems people have in their faith is contemplating the personal effects of God’s Love and our new found position belonging to Him as He transforms us into His Glory.”

Questions for Connections

- What do you find difficult in your walk with God? How do you hear God making corrections in your life?

- How would you describe what it is like to be “In Tune” with God? How do you do that? How do you listen to that voice that directs you moment by moment?

2 Peter 1:3-8

“His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature... For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love. For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Faith — Virtue — knowledge — Self-control — Steadfastness — Godliness — Brotherly Affection — Love

- If you were to self assess, Where are you personally on this graduating scale?
- Where would you like to be on the scale? How do you plan to move in that direction with your faith?
- What ways can you encourage each other to grow spiritually as you contemplate what God has done for you?

Spend some time sharing your prayer requests and offer prayer for one another.

Testimony - Telling what God has done for me.

Acts 1:8

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

1 Peter 3:15-16

but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect, having a good conscience, so that, when you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame.

Revelation 19:10

“...I am a fellow servant with you and your brothers who hold to the testimony of Jesus. Worship God.” For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.”

Would you please share your testimony with one another?

Many time people define their testimony as a single event that happened at the beginning of their walk with God. This is not the case as we consider that our walk is a continual experience. Testimony should be considered as the sharing of our current experience with Christ. **How would it effect your faith if you anticipated a daily encounter with Jesus?**

Questions for Connections

- Do you find it easy or difficult to share your experiences with Jesus? What makes it so?
- How does your experiences with Jesus establish your faith? What would your church experiences be like if you didn't have present day encounters with The Spirit happening with His followers?
- How can you create a safe environment for testimony to be shared naturally?

Spend some time sharing your prayer requests and offer prayer for one another.

Music Appreciation - The music that speaks to me

What are some spiritual songs that you appreciate and why are they meaningful to you?

Please share the song with each other.

Psalm 149:1-5

Sing to the LORD a New Song. Praise the LORD! Sing to the LORD a new song, his praise in the assembly of the godly! Let Israel be glad in his Maker; let the children of Zion rejoice in their King! Let them praise his name with dancing, making melody to him with tambourine and lyre! For the LORD takes pleasure in his people; he adorns the humble with salvation. Let the godly exult in glory; let them sing for joy on their beds.

Psalm 150:1-6

Let Everything Praise the LORD. Praise the LORD! Praise God in his sanctuary; praise him in his mighty heavens! Praise him for his mighty deeds; praise him according to his excellent greatness! Praise him with trumpet sound; praise him with lute and harp! Praise him with tambourine and dance; praise him with strings and pipe! Praise him with sounding cymbals; praise him with loud clashing cymbals! Let everything that has breath praise the LORD! Praise the LORD!

Questions for Connections

- When is a worship song most meaningful to you? What topics make the song heart felt for you?
- When you are worshiping with others, do you feel comfortable singing corporately?

- How does it make you feel when all the voices around you are singing together?
- Do you play an instrument, or do you sing? How do you feel when you use that talent for God?
- When someone criticizes your appreciation for music, how does that affect you? How does criticism impact your relationship with God?

Read this Scripture together:

Colossians 3:16 Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts.

- How does the music that has deep meaning to you allow the message of Christ dwell in you richly? In light of this message of Christ dwelling richly in you, how should appreciation for music happen in the context of worshiping together?

Spend some time sharing your prayer requests and offer prayer for one another.

Fellowship - Is hanging out a spiritual activity?

Psalm 133-1-3

Behold, how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity! It is like the precious oil on the head, running down on the beard, on the beard of Aaron, running down on the collar of his robes! It is like the dew of Hermon, which falls on the mountains of Zion! For there the LORD has commanded the blessing, life forevermore.

1 John 1:7

But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another...

“Christian brotherhood is not an ideal which we must realize; it is rather a reality created by God in Christ in which we may participate. The more clearly we learn to recognize that the ground and strength and promise of all our fellowship is in Jesus Christ alone, the more serenely shall we think of our fellowship and pray and hope for it.”

Bonhoeffer, Dietrich. Life Together (p. 13). Hymns Ancient and Modern Ltd. Kindle Edition.

Men and women who commune with God, who have an abiding Christ, make the very atmosphere holy, because they are co-operating with holy angels. Such witness is needed for this time.—(Testimonies for the Church 6:52.)

Questions for Discussion

- What do you enjoy about being with good friends?
- Does your time spent with good friends lend to your spiritual support? In what ways?
- How can fellowship be a part of your growing in your relationship with Christ?
- What are the things that keep you from allowing spiritual growth among your friends?
- What are some ways that you could turn the conversation with your friends to something spiritual without looking awkward?

Make a promise to each other that you each will attempt turning the conversation to a spiritual subject when with your peers, and then share what that was like the next time you are together.

Spend some time sharing your prayer requests and offer prayer for one another.

Giving of Yourself...

How much do you want me to give?

Malachi 3:10

Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. And thereby put me to the test, says the LORD of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you a blessing until there is no more need.

2 Corinthians 9:6-8

...Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work.

1 Chronicles 29:9-13

Then the people rejoiced because they had given willingly, for with a whole heart they had offered freely to the LORD. David the king also rejoiced greatly.

Questions for Connections

- How do you feel about giving money to the church? Why do you think the church offering is important?
- What ways can you contribute individually?
- How are you suppose to feel about giving money to God? Do you feel that way when you give?

Give a testimony as to the windows of heaven pouring out a blessing because you gave your tithe to the church.

- What do you do when you disagree with how the money is being used by the church?

More than Money

- What are other areas of giving that you can do on behalf of God?

Spend some time sharing your prayer requests and offer prayer for one another.

Reflection Question:

Questions for the Parents

1. What did you learn about your young person's spiritual views about the subject you worked through? _____

2. How might you include their value about the subject in your own personal worship experience? _____

On a scale of 1-10, how open are you to valuing your young person's worship experience as your own "in this subject"? 10 being very likely.

1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10.

3. What changes need to be made to bring your young person's views about this subject in your church worship experience? _____

How open are you to allow your young person to experience what they need spiritually "in this subject" at church worship?

1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10.

4. What can you do to protect your young person's spiritual views about this subject from non-receptive persons in your church? _____

How likely are you to defend your young person's spiritual needs from those who are critical at church?

1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10.

Reflection Question:

Questions for the Youth

1. What did you learn about your parent's spiritual views about the subject you worked through? _____

2. How would you include their value about the subject in your own personal worship experience? _____

On a scale of 1-10, how open are you to valuing your parents worship experience as your own in this subject? 10 being very likely.

1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10.

3. What changes need to be made for your parents views of this subject to be present in your church worship experience? _____

How open are you to allow your parents to experience what they need spiritually in this subject at church worship?

1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10.

4. What can you do to protect your parents spiritual views in this subject from non-receptive persons in your church? _____

How likely are you to defend your parent's spiritual needs from those who are critical at church?

1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10.

From 1907-1917 there was a rapid development of the youth program and new materials were prepared to provide leaders and youth with good reading and training.

1907	Senior Youth Standard of Attainment Course Senior Reading Course was begun Progress reports received from Africa and British Guyana.
1908	Church Calendar listed Young People's Day January 26 th ; Morning Watch Calendar was inaugurated Junior Reading Course began in October MV Societies began in Tahiti, Singapore, Norfolk, Fiji, and Portugal
1909	Junior Missionary Volunteers Societies (JMV) organized for ages 10-16 The Scandinavian Union organized Missionary Societies.
1910	Missionary Societies began in Bermuda.
1911	MV Leaflets developed German and Japanese Reading Course began Missionary Volunteers Societies organized in Korea Boys Clubs began in Takoma Park, Maryland and Lincoln, Nebraska.
1912	The Philippine Islands, South America, and Central America organized Missionary Volunteer Societies. Meade MacGuire appointed as Field Secretary for MV/JMV Societies (1912-1925).
1913	Morning Watch and Reading Course were published in Spanish Missionary Volunteers Societies organized in China and Budapest, Hungary.
1914	Junior Society Lessons were prepared Morning Watch Calendars developed in Danish, Norwegian, Swedish, and Chinese Reading Course was printed in Danish, Norwegian, and Swedish languages Ella Iden-Edwards wrote a Junior Manual Newly formed Church Officer's Gazette carried programs for Senior and Junior Youth meetings First overseas convention for young people's workers met in Shanghai, China.
1915	Senior Bible Year began Korean Morning Watch first published Junior Standard of Attainment was begun A council dealing with the rapid work of the Young People's Department convened in Saint Helena, California.

1916	First MV census in the history of Seventh-day Adventist youth was launched MV Societies were reported in the Bahamas Union MV Departments were given responsibilities of societies in their regions.
1917	English Junior Bible Year began English Primary Reading Course was established French Reading Course begun in Haiti.
1919	Missions Scouts started by Arthur W. Spalding for his sons and their friends in Tennessee. Spalding wrote a pledge and law for the club.

Development of New Programs and Youth Organizations

1920	Harriet Holt became Junior Secretary (Director) of the General Conference Youth Department. Harriet Holt and Arthur W. Spalding worked together planning a club ministry using the Pledge and Law that Spalding had earlier authored. In 1921 it became the Junior Missionary Volunteer Pledge and Law, which after many years is still an important part of Pathfinder ministry.
1922	The junior work was developing so quickly that U.V. Wilcox was added as a field secretary. JMV classes: Friend, Companion, and Comrade & MV Class Master Comrade were developed.
1924	Harriet Holt wrote a Junior Manual to give spiritual and physical ideas to help leaders train youth to be involved in their churches and communities.
1925	W. J. Gilson led out in the first Seventh-day Adventist summer camp held in December at Yarra Doon, near Warburton, in the Victorian Conference, Australasian Union.
1926	Grover Fattic, East Michigan Conference, lead out in the North America summer camp at Townline Lake, Michigan. The first camp for girls was held in Wisconsin, led by Harriet Holt. These small beginnings of the summer camp program have grown to be year-round ministries worldwide.
1927	Harriet Holt and Arthur Spalding, with the help of specialists in various fields, wrote the first 16 MV merits.

1927	In response to the message given by M. E. Kern, Pathfinders had their beginning. Guy Mann, Youth Director of the Southeast California Conference encouraged John McKim to start the first Pathfinder club on record, in Anaheim, California. McKim, a Scoutmaster, wanted to provide Christian activities for Adventist youth. He asked Willa Steen from the neighboring Fullerton Seventh-day Adventist Church to be the first girl's director. Their spouses Bertha McKim and Claude Steen supported this club ministry as did the two churches and the Conference. The club started small, but quickly outgrew the McKim's home and meetings were moved to the Lincoln School gym where they continued into the 1940's.
1928	C. Lester Bond published the requirements for the Vocational Honors (name changed from the Scouting term Merits) in the 1928 Junior Handbook that he wrote to give guidance to the growing work. Historic first youth congress in Europe at Chemnitz, Germany, directed by Steen Rasmussen.
1929	The Junior Handbook, updated by C. Lester Bond, included 19 additional vocational honors. The summer camp property, at Idyllwild, California, was named the JMV Pathfinder Camp.
1930	Second club on record begun by Lester and Ione Martin in the home of and co-directed by Dr. Theron and Ethel Johnston in Santa Ana, California. The Pre-JMV classes Busy Bee, Sunbeam, Builder, and Helping Hand were developed for grades 1-4 Arthur Spalding wrote Camping with JMV's.
1931	A program was presented at the General Conference to honor MV & JMV work with an Investiture Service, which included Investing Friends, Companions, Comrades, and 31 Master Comrades.
1932	Camp Leaders Handbook was written by C. Lester Bond and Arthur W. Spalding. Missionary Volunteer Week, which later became Week of Prayer, was initiated through the world field.
1937	A Pathfinder club was organized in Glendale in the Southern California Conference.
1938	A Pathfinder club began operating in Loma Linda, California, Southeastern California Conference. Master Comrade Manual was published MCC - Medical Cadet Corps, a training organization developed by Everett Dick at Union College, Nebraska and conducted by the Seventh-day Adventist Church to prepare young people for their obligatory military service, became official.

1939	Advanced Study and Service League were inaugurated to prepare MV's to conduct cottage and evangelistic meetings. Youth congress was held at Avondale College, Australia in December.
1942	Henry T. Bergh wrote a Trailblazer program in the North Pacific Union to train youth for Christian service. Laurence Skinner later used this program when he served in the North Pacific Union.
1945	Even during the war years the Youth Department was highly active; fifteen new honors were developed. Clark Smith authored the MCC Drill Manual, to guide Adventist youth in drill.
1946	Youth Director John H. Hancock helped to start the fifth Pathfinder club on record at the Riverside Church in the Southeastern California Conference. John Hancock designed the Pathfinder triangle emblem for the MV uniform.
1947	The sixth Pathfinder club on record was reorganized and lead by Lawrence Paulson in Glendale, California in the Southern California Conference. The first youth congress was held for the entire North American Division at San Francisco, California with 12,000 young people in attendance, directed by Eldine Dunbar and team.
1948	Henry T. Bergh, Central California Youth Director, started 23 clubs. The Pathfinder flag was created when Henry Bergh asked a coordinator to make a flag using John Hancock's triangle emblem. The coordinator, who did not sew, asked her friend Helen Hobbs to create it.
1949	The Pathfinder Song was written by Henry T. Bergh and copyrighted in 1952. The Pathfinder coordinator program was developed in the Central California Conference by H. T. Bergh. A Pathfinder staff training camp was held by Henry T. Bergh, Central California Conference Youth Director at Camp Wawona. A second youth congress was held for the Australian Division. As club ministry began to prosper, Laurence A. Skinner, Associate Youth Director of the General Conference, felt that it was time to launch the Pathfinder ministry worldwide. His colleagues Eldine W. Dunbar and Theodore E. Lucas agreed. Clark Smith and Henry T. Bergh wrote the Pathfinder Drill Manual.

1950	A historic event took place when the Pathfinder club ministry, developed in the Pacific Union, was adopted during the General Conference Session in San Francisco, California. Laurence Skinner became the first World Pathfinder Director. Several publications were printed to help the world field start clubs: How to start a Pathfinder Club, Pathfinder Staff Training Course, and Drill Manual. Eliezer Melendez, a 19-year-old schoolteacher, traveled home from the General Conference Session and began a Pathfinder club in Puerto Rico. Melendez later became the Inter-American Division Youth Director. For political reasons, Master Comrade was changed to Master Guide and Comrade to Guide.” The first Pathfinder fair on record was held at Saint Helena, California in Sanitarium Hall, Northern California Conference, with several hundred in attendance.
1951	MV Kit, a quarterly magazine, was introduced to guide MV societies. Trinidad and Tobago held their first Pathfinder fair. German Pathfinders held the first Pathfinder fair in Hamburg. The Pathfinder Staff Manual was published. July 24-29: 5,000 young people attended the Paris Youth Congress, under the leadership of J.J. Aitken, MV Secretary of the Southern European Division and Eldine W. Dunbar, General Conference of SDAs. Idea of collecting food for the needy, on Halloween, was begun as Dorcas Scouts in Minnesota under the direction of Mrs. Julius. Peru began their first Pathfinder club with Nercieda de Ruiz as director.
1952	Wisconsin Conference took the Halloween idea, naming it Can Collecting. The First Brazilian Youth Congress was held at Brazil College with 3,000 in attendance, with Laurence Skinner as speaker. An oratorical contest was held. Leo Ranzolin, a 19-year-old theology sophomore took first place. At age 36, at the General Conference Session in Atlantic City, New Jersey, Ranzolin became the third World Pathfinder Director.
1953	Pan American Youth Congress, held in San Francisco, California, themed “Christ Above All.” Eldine Dunbar and team directed, June 16-20 MV Legion of Honor, a volunteer code of right living with high standards for senior youth, began First Pathfinder camporee on record was held at Camp Winnekeag, Massachusetts, Atlantic Union, October 9-11 directed by W.E. Burns The first issue of Junior Guide Magazine, was published October 7 The songbook Singing Youth was published.
1954	Voice of Youth evangelistic program was adopted The leadership training course, MV Leadercraft, was developed

1956	E. L. Minchin was speaker for the first South American Youth Congress, held in the State of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, Jairo Araujo - directed The Explorer Class was added for 7 th graders.
1957	50 th Anniversary of MV was celebrated at Mount Vernon, Ohio, July 12-13; Art Patzer directed, working closely with the General Conference Youth Department. Participants included Milton E. Kern, Henry T. Elliott, Arthur W. Peterson, Eldine W. Dunbar, Theodore E. Lucas, Laurence A. Skinner, and Edwin L. Minchin. A monument for 50 years of service was unveiled. This monument is now part of the Pathfinder Museum collection.
1958	Advanced JMV Classes, Frontier Friend, Campfire Companion, Range Explorer, and Trail Finder Guide were launched.
1959	June 4-6 the first Union Camporee on record was held at Snoqualmie National Forest, Washington State with 1,000 North Pacific Union Pathfinders attending December 20, Singapore held their first Pathfinder fair The Pathfinder Drill Manual was revised by Clark Smith and Harry Garlick Sweden organized their first Pathfinder club.
1960	Second NAD Youth Congress was held in Atlantic City, New Jersey - themed Festival of the Holy Scriptures. H.M.S Richards made an appeal. About 100 young people committed their lives for ministry, including Les Pitton, who became the first NAD Youth Director in 1980 Pathfinders begin in Austria A Pathfinder camporee was held at Lake La Nauhe, Chile.
1961	Southern European Division held its first Division camporee, Steiner directed.
1962	Pathfinder Field Guide was published Pathfinder Teen Ministry was developed by Norm Middag, Associate Youth Director of the Northern California Conference, to encouraged teenagers to stay involved in youth ministry The MV Story was written by Nathaniel Krum.
1963	Pastor Ademar Quint, started the Spring Baptism of Youth in Brazil, which later became part of the South American and the World calendar.
1966	Pioneer Class level was developed for 8 th graders

1967	Florida Youth Director Norman Middag started, at Camp Kulaqua, High Springs, Florida, the first Adventist camp for the visually impaired in connection with Christian Record Services Youth Congress was held in Vienna, Austria.
1969	July 22-26 the first World Youth Congress was held in Zurich, Switzerland with 12,000 young people present, including youth from communist countries. The General Conference team directed.
1970	Second South American Division Youth Congress was held in Curitiba, State of Parana, Brazil, January 20-24, under the leadership F.N. Siqueira, South American Division Youth Director and Leo Ranzolin South Brazil Union Youth Director Pioneer Class level was renamed Ranger in the North American Division.
1971	Trans-European Division held a Camporee in Vasterang, Sweden, Sundqvist directed.
1972	July 19-29 Euro-Africa Division Camporee held at Villach, Austria - Nino Bulzis directed Pathfinders began in Italy under the name of Esploratori.
1974-1975	The 25 th anniversary of Pathfinder ministry was celebrated worldwide.
1976	MV Department, initiated by Leo Ranzolin, prepared for the Bi-Centennial of America program entitled 4-C's for Century Three: Camping, Community, Church and Campus Beautification, which was adopted by the Church First Brazilian Camporee held in Rio Grande do Sul, November 14-16 Youth World Advisory led by John Hancock was held in Tacoma Park, Maryland.
1977	Euro Africa Division held a camporee in Malcesine, Italy, July 11-19, Nino Bulzis- directed Northern Europe/West Africa Division held a camporee July 19-25, at Kallioneimen, Finland, Michael Stevenson directed.
1978	Southern Asia Division held a camporee, November 4-8, 1978 in Bangalore, India, Justin Singh directed.
1979	A historic event occurred when MV, used since 1907 was changed to AY - Adventist Youth and JMV to AJY – Adventist Junior Youth.

1980	Michael H. Stevenson of South Africa became the World Pathfinder Director A program called Seven Modules, Organization, Leadership, Commitment, Worship, Discipleship, Fellowship and Witness of unending opportunity for youth was adopted for the world field The Youth Leaders Handbook was revised/renamed Adventist Youth Honors A new Adventist youth leader logo was designed by John H. Hancock The 1980 MV Camp Directory was enlarged/renamed the World Adventist Youth Camp Directory.
1981	Euro-African Division held a camporee in Monoblet, France, Nino Bulzis directed The songbook Pathfinder Sing was published.
1982	Voyager Class was added for 9 th graders
1983	Inter-American Division held its first Pathfinder camporee in Oaxtepec, Mexico, March 24-29, Israel Leito directed Beginning Feb. 24, the Bi-Union Brisbane Camporee was held in Australia, Malcolm Allen directed South American Division held its first camporee, Dec. 28-Jan. 2, 1984 at Foz do Iguacu, Brazil, Claudio Belz directed.
1984	Dec. 28-Jan. 2, the second Pan-American Youth Congress was held in Mexico City, Mexico with 12,000 in attendance, GC team directed. A highlight was the presence of Cuban youth First East Japan Camporee was held in Phuket, Thailand, Donato directed Second European Congress was held in Exeter, England, James Huzzey directed Pan-African Division Congress was held in Nairobi.
1985	First North American Division Camporee was held at Camp Hale, Colorado, Les Pitton and team directed The Youth Department was incorporated into the Church Ministries Department.
1986	Malcolm Allen of Australia becomes World Pathfinder Director.
1987	Norm Middag designed an NAD Pathfinder emblem, which is currently used worldwide.

1989	Ron Streeter, Columbia Union Youth Director, held the NAD Friendship Camporee in Pennsylvania with 18,000 in attendance Pathfinder Leadership (PLA) and Pathfinder Instructor (PLA) Awards for continuing education for Master Guides were introduced.
1990-1991	Norm Middag was instrumental in developing the Pathfinder Instructor and Pathfinder Leadership Awards for continuing education. A highlight of Norm's career was the Witness through Roses project 1991-1993 which involved Pathfinders decorating Rose Parade Floats. Millions saw the award-winning floats and Seventh-day Adventist sign during the famous January 1 st Rose Parade in Pasadena, California Arnold and Dixie Plata, who worked closely with the General Conference Youth Department, were voted historians for the North American Division. The Plata's also traveled to South and Inter-America to display youth history and encourage others to share youth ministry in their divisions, unions, and conferences.
1992	John Hancock Youth Centers were established at La Sierra University in California and at Andrews University in Michigan.
1994	South American Division held its second camporee, Jan. 10-16 at Ponta Grossa, Parana, Brazil, Jose Maria de Silva directed. Trans-European Division held its sixth division camporee in Sweden, Kendal directed Romania began its first Pathfinder club Dare to Care International Camporee was held at Morrison, Colorado, Aug. 2-6, Ron Whitehead directed.
1997	Bi-Division Pathfinder Camporee in Indonesia, Missah and Wong directed.
1998	Second Inter-American Division Camporee was held Aug. 4-8 in Puerto Rico, Alfredo Garcia Marenko directed Latvia started their first Pathfinder club First South American Master Guide Convention held in Pucon, Chile, Jan. 13-17 First NAD Master Guide Convention held Feb. 11-19 in Los Angeles, California.
1999	"Discover the Power" International Camporee was held at Oshkosh, Wisconsin, Ron Whitehead directed. As part of the camporee, Desmond T. Doss, who received the Congressional Medal of Honor for saving the lives of 75 of his comrades while serving as a medic in the army, was highlighted.

2001	Baraka Muganda and Robert Holbrook held a World Advisory and International Youth Leadership Convention on August 9-13 in Aguas de Lindoia, State of Sao Paulo, Brazil.
2002	Third South American Division Youth Congress held in Chile, January 7-12 GYC Generation of Youth for Christ was organized by youth to meet the spiritual needs of youth.
2004	August 10-14 Faith on Fire International Camporee was held in Oshkosh, Wisconsin with 32,000 in attendance, Ron Whitehead director West African Division Camporee at Lome, Togo, August 22-28, Mulumba directed; Fransch Europe Youth Congress in Poland, August 4-7 Euro-Asia Youth Congress in Moscow.
2005	South American Division held its third camporee in the State of Parana, Brazil, with 28,000 in attendance. The theme was Fountain of Hope,” Erton Kohler directed.
2006	South Pacific Division held a youth congress in Fiji, January 1-5 The World Youth Ministry Advisory was held at Mount Etna Youth Camp in Maryland, March 16-April 2, Baraka Muganda and team directed.
2007	Division Youth Congress was held in Mukono, Uganda, April 1-9 Trans-European Division held its first Master Guide Camporee in Holland, May 24-27 Inter-American Division held a Youth Congress in Medellin, Colombia; theme: “Reclaiming our Youth.” Euro-Africa Division held a Pathfinder camporee, theme: Turn on the Light, at Fountainblue, Paris, France, July 31-August 5. Adventist Youth Ministries Museum was officially organized under the Pathfinder Museum Inc., President Terry Dodge. The goal was to build a building to preserve youth ministry history.
2008	Inter-Union Master Guide Camporee was held at Zalostoc, State of Morelos, Mexico, March 18-22; theme: “Escaladores al encuentro...Listos Señor.” Inter-American Division Youth Congress in Paynters, Antigua, May 8-12; theme: “Angels of Fire.”
2009	On August 11-15, 2009, The Courage To Stand International Pathfinder Camporee was held in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, U.S.A. The evening Bible Stories production portrayed the life of Esther. Ron Whitehead directed.

2010	Trans-European Division held a Pathfinder camporee at Ominen, Netherlands, July 29-August 5.
2011	Third Inter-American Division Camporee was held in Mexico City, Mexico, 20,000 attended, Benjamin Carballo director Euro-African Division held a camporee in Rome, Italy August 1-6, C. Cozzi and S. Sigg directed First Division Camporee for Northern Asia-Pacific held in South Korea, August 7-12, Haky Hyung Kim directed.
2013	Global Youth Day, organized by Gilbert Cangy, to motivate young people worldwide to be involved in their communities.
2014	Fourth South American Division Camporee held in Barretos, Sao Paulo, Brazil, directed by Udolcy Zukowski with 35,000 in attendance Trans-European Division held a camporee July 29-August 5 at Ommen, Netherlands, Paul Tompkins directed Southern Africa-Indian Ocean Division held a camporee at Livingstone, Zambia, April 13-19, B. Khumalo director Fourth International Camporee, Forever Faithful, held in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, August 12-16, with 45,000 in attendance, Ron Whitehead director North American Division held the Youth Prayer Conference at Miami, Florida, Feb. 19-22, led by James Black Southern Asia Division held a youth congress in Pune, India, April 30-May 4; theme; “Inspire,” Mohan Bhatti directed.
2015	South Pacific Division held a Pathfinder camporee, theme: “I trust,” Jan. 6-11 at Toowoomba, QLD, Australia with 8,500 in attendance, Nick Kross directed Inter-European Division held a Pathfinder camporee in Switzerland, Aug. 3-9, Stephan Sigg directed.
2017	Gilbert Cangy returned to the South Pacific Jonatan Tejel returned to the Euro-Africa Division as youth director Tracy Wood and Armando Miranda of the NAD developed the Historian Ministry Historians Arnold and Dixie Plata were appointed coordinators for this ministry to encourage development of historian displays for each division, union, and conference to preserve youth ministry history.

2019	South American Division held historic Pathfinder events, two division camporees, the Alpha, January 8-13, and the Omega, January 15-20. These were held back to back in the same location to accommodate 100,000 Pathfinders and staff in the city of Barretos, State of Sao Paulo, Brazil, Udolcy Zukowski directed Inter-America Division held a special Youth Directors Meeting - May 22-29, directed by Al Powell August 12-17, 55,000 Pathfinders and staff plus volunteers attended the “Chosen” International Camporee at Oshkosh, Wisconsin; Ron Whitehead directed.
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⁵¹ Leo Ranzolin and Dixie Plata, “History of the Youth Department of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists,” accessed November 30, 2022, <https://encyclopedia.adventist.org/assets/pdf/article-6B3B.pdf>. November 29, 2020.